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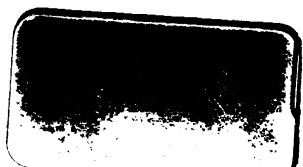
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THE  
COTTAGER'S GUIDE  
TO THE  
NEW TESTAMENT;  
THAT IS  
THE LIFE AND DOCTRINE  
OF  
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,  
PLAINLY SET FORTH.

—  
VOL. VI.  
—



BY THE REV. ALEXANDER DALLAS, A. M.,  
RECTOR OF WONSTON, HANTS.

~~~~~  
"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little." Isa. xxviii. 9, 10.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor." Luke iv. 18.

"To the poor the Gospel is preached." Luke vii. 22.  
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**INTRODUCTION**  
**TO THE SIXTH VOLUME**  
OF  
*THE COTTAGER'S GUIDE TO THE NEW TESTAMENT.*

---

THE Cottager's Guide to the New Testament has carried the reader through the life and doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ as far as it is detailed in the four Gospels, up to the day before that on which he suffered on the Cross. That part of the History already explained has been divided into one hundred and seventy-five portions; and that part which remains will occupy forty portions more, making 215 in the whole. These will be continued in the sixth Volume now commenced; and when it shall be finished, the six Volumes will form a complete Work, which will then be entitled "The Cottager's Guide to the Four Gospels; that is, the Life and Doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ plainly set forth."

As the remaining portions have all been arranged, it will be useful to give at the beginning of this Volume such a general view of that portion of our Lord's history which it contains, as has been given at the end of the preceding Volumes.

In order to make it more easy to refer to any part of the Gospels which contains any particular subject, and to find the portion where it is explained, as well as to obtain a clear view of the whole course of our Lord's history in a short compass, a complete Index has been arranged, in which the subjects of the portions have been condensed, and the Scriptures stated in harmony, according to the arrangement of the Rev. Edward Gresswell; which has been followed all along in this work. Any person who will take the trouble to fix in their minds the order and place of this Index, cannot fail of finding it very useful in their general study of the Scriptures. To enable them to do this, an explanation of the Index is placed before it.

**NOTICE to the Reader at the beginning of the sixth Volume of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament, which closes the Guide to the Gospels.**

In the general view of the remaining portions of the Gospels which are to occupy the sixth Volume, it will be found that it occupies a period of fifty-four days, beginning with the day before our Lord's Crucifixion, and ending on the day of his Ascension into heaven.

On Thursday (4th of April in the year 30) the Paschal Supper was prepared for our Lord ; and from the time of his partaking of it with his disciples every hour is accounted for in the Gospel History. He continued in the Supper-chamber till past midnight ; when he went to the garden of Gethsemane, where he was apprehended before two o'clock on Friday Morning, 5th of April ;—it being bright moonlight. He first went through a preparatory examination in the palace of the High Priest : after which (about 3 o'clock in the morning) the form of a legal trial, before the Sanhedrim, was gone through in the Council-chamber in the Temple Court. Upon his condemnation Judas brought back the bribe, and committed suicide. Scriptures, Matt. xxvi. 17—75 ; xxvii. 1—10. Mark xiv. 12—72 ; xv. 1. Luke xxii. 7—71 ; xxiii. 1. John xiii., xiv., xv., xvi., xvii., xviii. 1—27. (Portions 176 to 191. z.)

Our Lord was then taken to Pilate's palace, where he arrived about 5 o'clock in the morning. Here he was first privately questioned, and then brought publicly before the judgment seat, about 6 o'clock, a.m. He was sent to Herod's palace—mocked by him, and returned to Pilate, who passed judgment on him and delivered him for execution, at about 8 o'clock, a.m. Scriptures, Matt. xxvii. 11—26. Mark xv. 2—15. Luke xxiii. 2—25. John xviii. 28—40 ; xix. 1—16. (Portions 192 to 196. aa.)

Jesus was led to Calvary, outside the gates of Jerusalem, and there crucified at 9 o'clock in the morning. He was on the cross six hours; and at 3 in the afternoon he expired. The body was claimed by Joseph of Arimathææ; and hastily buried, in order to complete the work before 6 o'clock in the evening, when the sabbath commenced. Scriptures, Matt. xxvii. 27—61. Mark xv. 16—47. Luke xxiii. 26—56. John xix. 16—42. (Portions 197 to 203. *bb.*)

A watch was set on the sepulchre during the Sabbath—Saturday 6th April. Scripture, Matt. xxvii. 62—66. (Por. 204. *cc.*)

At daylight on Sunday morning, the 7th April, the resurrection took place. Then followed the circumstances connected with this great event; and our Lord's subsequent appearances until his ascension. Scriptures, Matt. xxviii. Mark xvi. 1—14. Luke xxiv. 1—43. John xx. 1—29; xxi. 1—24. (Por. 205 to 213. *dd.*)

Our Lord appeared upon ten different occasions after his resurrection; at the last of which he ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives, near Bethany. This event took place on Thursday the 16th May, A.D., 30. Scriptures, Mark xvi. 15-19. Luke xxiv. 44—53. (Portion 214. *ee.*)

The Gospel History is concluded in Mark xvi. 20. John xx. 30, 31; xxi. 25. (Portion 215. *ff.*)



## General and Condensed Index of the whole of the portions of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament.

### EXPLANATION OF THE INDEX.

1. The first column contains the number of the portions. A letter in italic character is placed before some of the numbers : these letters distinguish the beginning portion of each of the divisions of the GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL HISTORY already given in the Notices to the Reader with each Volume. There are 32 of these divisions, marked from *a* to *ff*.

2. The second column shews whether the portion contains an account of any of our Lord's miracles, parables, discourses or conversations. These are stated in numerical order ; and in the whole there are recorded 46 Miracles, 28 Parables, 31 Discourses and 76 Conversations ; indexes of which are given with the Volumes.

3. The third column specifies the general subject of the portion. This is stated in the fewest possible words which may serve to recall to memory the main feature of the passage. Thus the eye running down this column, will catch at once the thought that directs to any particular passage for which search is made.

4. The fourth column states the place at which the circumstances related in the portion took place. The abbreviations are such as will sufficiently mark the name of the place to a person but moderately versed in Scripture.

5. The fifth column states the time at which the circumstances related in the portion happened. When Mr. Gresswell gives a minute date of the month or day it is noted ; and on the day of our Lord's Passion the hours are marked. These minute dates are stated by placing, first the number of the day of the month, and then the number in which the month stands in order in the year, dividing the two numbers by a comma : thus 5,10 means the fifth of October. Where two such dates occur in the same line, they shew the days of the two prominent events mentioned as the subject of the portion : thus " Birth and Circumcision of John 5,10 12,10 " means, that the birth took place on the fifth of October, and the circumcision on the twelfth of that month. So " flight into Egypt, and return 9,8 v c. 3 31,3 " means, that the flight took place on the ninth of August in the year 4 before the common calculation, and the return on the thirty-first of

March in the following year. The capital letters connected with such dates express the days of the week, S. being always placed for Saturday and T. for Tuesday.

6. The sixth division of the Index contains the Scriptures, and is divided into four columns for the four Gospels, arranged in harmony. The figures denoting the chapters are sufficiently distinguished from those denoting the verses, the former being always followed by a *period*, the latter by a *comma* or *break*, and never by a *period*.

7. The portions numbered 1 to 42, and marked from *a* to *f*, are found in Volume I.

Those numbered 43 to 81, and marked from *g* to *k*, are found in Volume II.

Those numbered 82 to 109, and marked from *l* to *q*, are found in Volume III.

Those numbered 110 to 146, and marked from *r* to *u*, are found in Volume IV.

Those numbered 147 to 175, and marked from *v* to *y*, are found in Volume V.

Those numbered 176 to 215, and marked from *z* to *ff*, are found in Volume VI.

It may be useful to add the following, as Gresswell's statement of the places and dates of the original publication of the four Gospels.

|                                           |                   |                               |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| St. Matthew, first in Hebrew<br>in Judea, | } A.D. 42 or 12 } | years after the<br>Ascension. |
| Do. in Greek at Rome,                     | " 55 or 25        | "                             |
| St. Mark, in Greek at Rome,               | " 55 or 25        | "                             |
| St. Luke, " " "                           | " 60 or 30        | "                             |
| St. John, " at Ephesus,                   | " 101 or 71       | "                             |

# **GENERAL CONDENSED INDEX AND HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS,** **ACCORDING TO GRESSWELL.** (See the Explanation: page 4.)

| Per. | Mir. Par.<br>Dis. Con. | Subject.                                        | Place.                      | Time.                      | SCRIPTURES. |        |              |          |
|------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|--------|--------------|----------|
|      |                        |                                                 |                             |                            | Matt.       | Mark.  | Luke.        | John.    |
| a    | 1                      | <i>Before the Ministry of John the Baptist.</i> |                             | B. C. 6                    |             |        |              |          |
|      | 2                      | A son promised to Zacharias                     | Jerusalem                   | 5,10 Th.                   |             |        | 1. 1-25      | ch. ver. |
|      | 3                      | The Annunciation                                | Nazareth                    |                            |             |        | 26-38        | .....    |
|      | 4                      | Mary's visit to Elizabeth                       | Hill coun.                  |                            |             |        | 39-56        | .....    |
|      | 5                      | Joseph instructed about Mary                    | Nazareth                    | B. C. 5 [S.                |             |        |              | .....    |
|      | 6                      | Birth and circumcision of John                  | Hill coun.                  | 5,10 12,10                 | 1. 18-25    |        |              | .....    |
|      | 7                      | Birth of Jesus                                  | Bethlehem                   | B. C. 4: 5,4,8             |             |        | 57-80        | .....    |
|      | 8                      | Circum. of Jesus—Genealogies                    | "                           | 12,4. S.                   | 1-17        |        | 2. 1-20, [38 | .....    |
|      | 9                      | Presentation of Jesus                           | Jerusalem                   | 16,5. F.                   |             |        | 21; iii, 23  | .....    |
|      | 10                     | Visit of the Magi                               | Jeru. Bethl.                | 2,8 [31,3                  | 2. 1-12     |        | 2. 22-38     | .....    |
|      | 11                     | Flight into Egypt, and return                   | Be. Eg. Naz.                | 9,8 B. C. 3:               | 13-23       |        | 39           | .....    |
| b    | 12                     | Jesus' childhood—with doctors                   | Jeru. Naz.                  | A. D. 8: 8,4               |             |        | 40-52        | .....    |
|      | 13                     | <i>Ministry of</i>                              | <i>John.</i>                | <i>A. D. 26</i>            |             |        |              |          |
|      | 14                     | Christ the Word                                 | Wil. B-aba.                 | 5,10. M.                   | 3. 1-6      | 1. 1-6 | 3. 1-6       | 1. 1-18  |
|      | 15                     | John preaches and baptizes                      | Bethabara                   |                            | 7-10        |        | 7-14         | .....    |
|      | 16                     | Jesus baptized                                  | "                           |                            | 11-17       | 7-11   | 15-23        | .....    |
|      | 17                     | Jesus tempted                                   | Wildes. &c.                 | A. D. 27.                  | 4. 1-11     | 12, 13 | 4. 1-13      | .....    |
|      | 18                     | John's testimony to Jesus                       | Jordan                      |                            |             |        |              | 19-34    |
|      | 19                     | Disciples follow Jesus                          | "                           |                            |             |        |              | 35-51    |
|      | 20                     | Marriage at Cana                                | Cana                        |                            |             |        |              | 2. 1-11  |
|      | 21                     | <i>First Passover.</i>                          | <i>John's Ministry ends</i> | <i>and Jesus's begins.</i> |             |        |              |          |
| c    | 22                     | Jesus at Capern., traders expelled              | Cap. Jerus.                 | 9,4. F.                    |             |        |              | 12, 25   |
|      | 23                     | Conversation with Nicodemus                     | Jerusalem                   |                            |             |        |              | 3. 1-21  |
|      | 24                     | Jesus begins to baptize                         | Ænon, Jeru                  |                            |             |        |              | 22-36    |
|      | 25                     | The woman of Samaria                            | Sychar                      | 19,5. Th.                  |             |        |              | 4. 1-42  |

| Por.   | Mir. Pa.<br>Dis. Con. | Subject.                              | Place.      | Time.     | Matt.           | Mark.       | Luke.    | John.    |
|--------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| 24     | mir. 2                | The nobleman's son healed             | Capna       | A. D. 27  | ch. ver.        | ch. ver.    | ch. ver. | ch. ver. |
| 25     | mir. 3 dis. 1         | Jesus driven from Nazareth            | Nazareth    |           | .....           | .....       | 4. 14-30 | 4. 43-54 |
| 26     | .....                 | He settles at Cap., calls 4 disciples | Capernaum   |           | .....           | .....       | 31-32    | .....    |
| 27     | mir. 4                | A devil cast out [1st gene. circuit]  | "           | 4, 6 F.   | 4. 12-22        | 1. 14-22    | 33-37    | .....    |
| 28     | .....                 | Many mir., Simon's wife's mother,     | Cap., Cana  |           | [14-17          | 23-28       | 38-44    | .....    |
| 29-42  | dis. 2                | Sermon on the mount                   | Cap., Cana  | 6, 6 Su.  | 23-25; viii     | 29-39       | .....    | .....    |
| 43     | mir. 6                | Draught of fishes                     | Capernaum   |           | 5. 1 to vii. 29 | .....       | 5. 1-11  | .....    |
| 44     | mir. 7                | Leper healed                          | Nr. Choraz. |           | 8. 1            | 40-45       | 12-16    | .....    |
| 45     | mir. 8                | Paralysed man healed                  | Cap. [Wild. |           | 2-4             | 2. 1-12     | 17-26    | .....    |
| 46     | con. 9                | Levi called—his feast, &c.            | "           |           | 9. 2-8          | 13-22       | 27-39    | .....    |
| 47     | mir. 9, 10            | Sick man at Bethsaida healed          | Jerusalem   | A. D. 28  | .....           | .....       | .....    | 5. 1-16  |
| 48     | dis. 3                | Christ's divinity [hand]              | "           | 25, 3 Su. | 12. 1-14        | 23—iii. 6   | 6. 1-11  | .....    |
| 49     | mi. 11 c. 10          | Sabbath—ears of corn—withered         | Capernaum   |           | 15-21           | 3. 7-12     | .....    | .....    |
| 50     | .....                 | Many miracles, and partial circuit    | "           |           | 10. 2-4         | 13-19       | 12-16    | .....    |
| 51     | .....                 | Ordination of the twelve              | Nr. Capern. |           | .....           | .....       | 17-49    | .....    |
| 52, 53 | dis. 4                | Sermon on the plain                   | "           |           | 8. 5-13         | .....       | 7. 1-10  | .....    |
| 54     | mir. 12               | Centurion's servant healed            | Capernaum   |           | .....           | .....       | 11-16    | .....    |
| 55     | mir. 13               | Widow's son raised                    | Nain        |           | 11. 2-6         | .....       | 17-23    | .....    |
| 56     | con. 11               | The Baptist's message to Christ       | "           |           | 7-30            | .....       | 24-35    | .....    |
| 57, 58 | dis. 5                | Discourse about the Baptist           | "           |           | .....           | .....       | 36-50    | .....    |
| 59     | con. 12               | Union at Simon's the Pharisee         | "           |           | .....           | .....       | 8. 1-3   | .....    |
| 60     | .....                 | Second general circuit                | Capern. &c. |           | .....           | 20, 21      | .....    | .....    |
| 61     | mir. 14 di. 6         | A devil cast out—Disc. on Satan       | "           |           | 12. 22-37       | 22-30       | .....    | .....    |
| 62     | di. 7 con. 13         | A sign refused to the Pharisees       | "           |           | 38-45           | .....       | .....    | .....    |
| 63     | con. 14               | Who are Christ's kindred?             | "           |           | 46-50           | 31-35       | .....    | .....    |
| 64     | .....                 | Opening of discourse of Parables      | Lake        |           | 13. 1-3 [23     | 4. 1, 2 [20 | 4 [15    | .....    |
| 65     | par. 1                | The Sower                             | "           |           | 3-9, 18-        | 3-9, 14-    | 5-8, 11- | .....    |
| 66     | con. 15               | Why Jesus taught in parables          | "           |           | 10-17           | .....       | .....    | .....    |
| 67     | par. 2                | The wheat and the tares               | "           |           | 24-30, 36       | .....       | .....    | .....    |
| 68     | par. 3                | The seed growing secretly             | "           |           | [43             | 26-29       | .....    | .....    |

| Por.   | Mtr. Pa.<br>Dis. Con. | Subject.                              | Place.       | Time.     | Matt.                  | Mark.                | Luke.             | John.   |
|--------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------|
| 69     | par. 4                | The mustard-seed                      | Lake         | A. D. 28  | ch. ver.<br>13. 31, 32 | ch. ver.<br>4. 80-82 | ch. ver.<br>..... | .....   |
| 70     | par. 5                | The leaven                            | "            |           | 33-35                  | 33, 34 [25           | .....             | .....   |
| 71     | con. 16               | Concerning parables                   | Capernaum    |           | 36                     | 10-13, 21-           | [18               | .....   |
| 72     | par. 6, 7             | The hid treasure, and pearl           | "            |           | 44-46                  | .....                | 8. 9, 10, 16-     | .....   |
| 73     | par. 8                | The drag-net                          | "            |           | 47-52                  | .....                | .....             | .....   |
| 74     | .....                 | The relations come again              | "            |           | [18-22                 | .....                | 19-21             | .....   |
| 75     | con. 17               | Embarking, the scribe, the disciple   | "            |           | 13. 53: viii.          | 35                   | .....             | .....   |
| 76     | mir. 15               | The storm subdued                     | "            |           | 8. 23-27               | 36-41                | 22-25             | .....   |
| 77     | mir. 16               | The legion cast into the swine        | Lake         |           | 28-34: ix              | 5. 1-20              | 26-39             | .....   |
| 78     | con. 18, 19           | The legion cast into the swine        | Gadara       |           | 9. 10-17 [1            | 21                   | 40                | .....   |
| 79     | mir. 17, 18           | On eating with sinners, & fasting     | Capernaum    |           | 18-26                  | 22-43                | 41-56             | .....   |
| 80     | mir. 19, 20           | Woman healed—Jairus's dau. rais.      | "            |           | 27-34                  | .....                | .....             | .....   |
| 81     | con. 20               | 2 blind men and a demoniac healed     | "            |           | 13. 54-58 [5           | 6. 1-6               | .....             | .....   |
| 82     | } dis. 8              | Visit to Nazareth—offence             | Nazareth     |           | 9. 35-38: x. 5         | 6-11                 | .....             | .....   |
| 83     |                       | Mission of the Apostles, and charge   | Galilee      | A. D. 29  | x. 16-42: xi.          | 12, 13               | 9. 1-5            | .....   |
| 84     | .....                 | Charge concluded—Third circuit        | "            | Feb.      | 14. 1-12 [1            | 14-29                | 6                 | .....   |
| 85     | mir. 21               | Herod's conscience alarmed            | "            | 5, 4 Th.  | 13-21                  | 30-44                | 7-9               | .....   |
| 86     | mir. 22               | 5,000 miraculously fed                | Des. Decap.  |           | .....                  | .....                | 10-17             | 6. 1-13 |
| 87     | .....                 | <i>Third Passover.</i>                |              |           | .....                  | .....                | .....             | .....   |
| 88, 89 | mir. 22               | Jesus walks on the water              | Lake         |           | 22-33                  | 45-52                | .....             | 14-21   |
| 90     | dis. 9 con. 21        | He returns to Capernaum               | "            |           | 34-36                  | 53-56                | .....             | 22-21   |
| 91     | con. 22               | Discourse in the synagogue            | Capernaum    | 7, 4 S.   | .....                  | .....                | .....             | 25-74   |
| 92     | con. 23               | Pharisees reproved for traditions     | "            |           | 15. 1-9                | 7. 1-13              | .....             | .....   |
| 93     | mir. 23               | What defiles                          | " [ & Sid.   |           | 10-20                  | 14-23                | .....             | .....   |
| 94     | mir. 24               | The woman of Canaan                   | coa. of Tyre |           | 21-28                  | 24-30                | .....             | .....   |
| 95     | mir. 25               | A deaf and tongue-tied man healed     | Decapolis    |           | 29-31                  | 31-37                | .....             | .....   |
| 96     | con. 24               | 4,000 miraculously fed                | "            |           | 32-39                  | 8. 1-10              | .....             | .....   |
| 97     | con. 25               | A sign from the sky refused           | Magdala      |           | 16. 1-4                | 11, 12               | .....             | .....   |
| 98     | con. 26               | Leaven of the Pharisees, hypocrisy    | { Betha. nr. |           | 4-12                   | 13-21                | .....             | .....   |
| 99     | con. 27, 28           | A blind man healed                    | { Decap.     | 20, 5 Su. | .....                  | 22-26                | .....             | .....   |
|        |                       | Peter's confession of Christ [rebuk.  | { nr. Cesar. |           | 13-20                  | 27-30                | 9. 18-21          | .....   |
|        |                       | Jesus' 1st proph. of his death, Peter | { Philippi   |           | 21-28                  | 31—ix. 1             | 22-27             | .....   |



| Por. | Mtr. Par<br>Dis. Con. | Subject.                                           | Place.       | Time.             | Matt.    | Mark.    | Luke.    | John.      |
|------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| q    | 100                   | The Transfiguration                                | Mt. Tab. Ga. | A.D. 29           | ch. ver. | ch. ver. | ch. ver. | ch. ver.   |
|      | 101                   | Of the resurrection, and of Elias                  | Nr. " "      | 27, 5 Su.         | 17. 1-8  | 9. 2-8   | 9. 28-36 | .....      |
|      | 102                   | The demoniac boy healed                            | Galilee      |                   | 9-13     | 9-13     | .....    | .....      |
|      | 103                   | Second prophecy of the crucifixion                 | Capernaum    |                   | 14-21    | 14-29    | 37-42    | .....      |
|      | 104                   | The tribute money procured                         | "            |                   | 22, 23   | 30-32    | 43-45    | 7. 1       |
|      | 105                   | Reproof of contention for honours                  | "            |                   | 24-27    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
|      | 106                   | The dispute refer. to J., his decision             | "            |                   | .....    | 38-50    | 46-50    | .....      |
|      | 107                   | Christians not to be despised                      | "            |                   | 18. 1-9  | .....    | .....    | .....      |
|      | 108                   | Disputes referred to the Church                    | "            |                   | 10-14    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
|      | 109                   | The king and his debtor                            | "            |                   | 15-20    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
|      |                       | The king and his debtor                            | "            |                   | 21-35    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
| r    | 110                   | and a half of our Lord's ministry completed.       | Cap. & Jer.  | 15, 10 M.         | .....    | .....    | .....    | 7. 2-13    |
|      | 111, 112              | Fest of Tabernacles—Jesus there                    | Jerusalem    |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 14-viii. 1 |
|      | 113                   | Jesus teaches in the temple                        | "            |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 8. 2-11    |
|      | 114-116               | The adulteress in the temple                       | " Temple     |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 12-59      |
|      |                       | Teaching in the temple resumed                     | " "          |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 9. 1-41    |
|      | 117                   | Sight given to the man born blind                  | "            | 18, 10 Th.        | .....    | .....    | .....    | 10. 1-21   |
|      | 118                   | The Good Shepherd                                  | "            |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
|      |                       | (Here nothing recorded during two months.) A.D. 30 | Jem & Jord.  | January           | .....    | .....    | .....    | 22-42      |
| s    | 119                   | Divinity of Jesus—feast of Dedica.                 | Bethany      |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 11. 1-44   |
| t    | 120                   | Lazarus raised                                     | "            |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 45-54      |
|      | 121                   | High priest prophes. of Jesus' death               | Jem., Ephm.  | before His death. | .....    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
| u    | 122                   | Final and public journey, began two months         | Samaria      | February          | .....    | .....    | 9. 51-62 | .....      |
|      | 123                   | Jesus sets forth through Samaria                   | Capernaum    |                   | .....    | .....    | 10. 1-16 | .....      |
|      | 124                   | The mission of the 70 [circuit]                    | "            | March             | .....    | .....    | 17-24    | .....      |
|      | 125                   | The 70 return. 4th and last general                | "            |                   | .....    | .....    | 25-37    | .....      |
|      | 126                   | The good Samaritan                                 | Galilee      |                   | .....    | .....    | 38-42    | .....      |
|      | 127                   | Jesus in Martha's house                            | "            |                   | .....    | .....    | 11. 1-13 | .....      |
|      | 128                   | How to pray                                        | "            |                   | .....    | .....    | 14-26    | .....      |
|      | 129                   | A dumb spirit cast out                             | "            |                   | .....    | .....    | 27-36    | .....      |
|      | 130                   | A sign again refused                               | "            |                   | .....    | .....    | 37-54    | .....      |
|      |                       | Pharisees and lawyers reproved                     | "            |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | .....      |

| <i>Por.</i> | <i>Mir. Par. Dis. Con.</i> | <i>Subject.</i>                    | <i>Place.</i>                          | <i>Time.</i>     | <i>Matt.</i> | <i>Mark.</i> | <i>Luke.</i> | <i>John.</i> |
|-------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|             |                            |                                    | Galilee                                | A.D. 30<br>March | ch. ver.     | ch. ver.     | ch. ver.     | ch. ver.     |
| 131         | dis. 17                    | Warning against hypocrisy          | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 12. 1-12     | .....        |
| 132         | d.18 p.12                  | The rich man's folly               | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 13-34        | .....        |
| 133         | par. 13                    | The waiting servants               | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 35-48        | .....        |
| 134         | dis. 19                    | The discourse concluded            | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 49-54        | .....        |
| 135         | par. 14                    | The barren fig-tree                | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 13. 1-9      | .....        |
| 136         | m.34 p.4,5                 | Woman healed on the sabbath day    | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 10-21        | .....        |
| 137         | dis. 20                    | Will few be saved?                 | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 22-30        | .....        |
| 138         | c.42 m.35                  | Jesus warned of Herod—dropsy       | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 31-xiv.6     | .....        |
| 139         | dis. 21                    | Forward pride reproved [cured]     | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 14. 7-14     | .....        |
| 140         | par. 15                    | The great Supper                   | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 15-24        | .....        |
| 141         | dis. 22                    | Count the cost                     | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 25-35        | .....        |
| 142         | par.16,17                  | Lost sheep—lost piece of money     | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 15. 1-10     | .....        |
| 143         | par. 18                    | The prodigal son                   | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 11-32        | .....        |
| 144         | par. 19                    | The unjust steward                 | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 16. 1-13     | .....        |
| 145         | p.20 d.23                  | Covetousness—rich man & Lazarus    | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 14-31        | .....        |
| 146         | d.24 m.36                  | Snares—faith—duty—ten lepers       | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 17. 1-19     | .....        |
| 147         | dis. 25                    | Kingdom of God & Christ's coming   | Perea                                  |                  | 19. 1, 2     | 10. 1        | 20-37        | .....        |
| 148         | par.21,22                  | Impotent widow—Pharisee and        | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | 18. 1-14     | .....        |
| 149         | con. 43                    | Unlawfulness of divorce [Publ.]    | "                                      |                  | .....        | .....        | .....        | .....        |
| 150         | con. 44                    | Children brought to Christ         | "                                      |                  | 9-12         | 2-12         | .....        | .....        |
| 151         | con. 45                    | The rich ruler                     | "                                      |                  | 13-15        | 13-16        | 15-17        | .....        |
| 152         | c.46 p.23                  | Labourers in the vineyard          | "                                      | 29.3             | 16-26        | 17-27        | 18-27        | .....        |
| 153         | con. 47,48                 | Third prophecy of the crucifixion  | "                                      | "                | 27-xx.16     | 28-31        | 28-30        | .....        |
| 154         | mir. 37,38                 | Two blind men cured                | Judea                                  | "                | 20. 17-28    | 32-45        | 31-34        | .....        |
| 155         | con. 49                    | Jesus visits Zaccheus              | Nr. Jericho                            | "                | 29-34        | 40-52        | 35-xix.1     | .....        |
| 156         | par. 24                    | The ten pounds                     | between                                | "                | .....        | .....        | 19. 2-10     | .....        |
| 157         | con. 50                    | Jesus anointed                     | Jeru. & Jer.                           | "                | .....        | .....        | 11-27        | .....        |
|             |                            | Beginning of Passion Week.         | Bethany                                | 30.3             | 26. 6-13     | 14. 3-9      | 28           | 11. 55-xii.8 |
|             |                            | Triumphant entry into Jerusalem    | Sunday,                                | March 31.        | [17          | .....        | .....        | .....        |
| w 158       | con. 51,52                 | The voice from heaven              | Beth. Jeru.                            | Su. & M.         | 21. 1-11,14  | 11. 1-11     | 29-44        | 12. 9-19     |
| 159         | con. 53                    | Bar. figtree—temple again cleansed | Temple                                 | Mon. 1,4         | [13          | .....        | .....        | 20-36        |
| x 160       | mir. 39                    |                                    | bet <sup>n</sup> . By J <sup>m</sup> . | Tues. 2,4        | 18-22,12,    | 12-19        | 45-48        | .....        |

| Por.    | Mir. Par.<br>Dia. Con. | Subject.                         | Place         | Time         | Matt.        | Mark             | Luke        | John          |
|---------|------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| y 161   | d. 26 c. 54            | Jesus asked for his authority    | Temple        | 4, D. 30     | ch. ver.     | ch. ver.         | ch. ver.    | ch. ver.      |
| 162     | par. 25                | The Vineyard let out             | "             | Wed. 3, 4    | 21. 23-32    | 11. 20-33        | 20. 1-8     | .....         |
| 163     | par. 26                | The wedding garment              | "             | "            | 83-46        | 12. 1-12         | 9-19        | .....         |
| 164     | con. 55                | As to paying taxes               | "             | "            | 22. 1-14     | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 165     | con. 56                | Doctrine of the Resurrection     | "             | "            | 15-22        | 13-17            | 20-26       | .....         |
| 166     | con. 57                | Which is the great Commandment?  | "             | "            | 23-33        | 18-27            | 27-40       | .....         |
| 167     | con. 58                | Christ, the Lord of David        | "             | "            | 34-40        | 28-34            | .....       | .....         |
| 168     | con. 59                | The widow's mite                 | "             | "            | 41-46        | 35-40            | 41-47       | .....         |
| 169     | dis. 27                | Continued unbelief of the Jews   | "             | "            | .....        | 41-44            | 21. 1-4     | .....         |
| 170     | dis. 28                | The reproof of the eight woes    | "             | "            | .....        | .....            | .....       | 12. 37-50     |
| 171     | d. 29                  | Prophecy upon the Mount          | Mount of      | "            | 23.          | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 172     | " p. 27                | " —The ten virgins               | Olives        | "            | 24. 1-44 [13 | 13. 1-37         | 5-36        | .....         |
| 173     | " p. 28                | " " —The talents                 | "             | "            | 45-51; 25. 1 | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 174     | "                      | " " —Separation of the nations   | "             | "            | 25. 14-30    | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 175     | .....                  | The conspiracy—Judas bribed      | Jerusalem     | "            | 31-46        | .....            | 1-6         | .....         |
| z 176   | con. 60                | The last supper prepared         | Beth. Jeru.   | Thurs. 4, 4  | 26. 1-5, 14- | 14. 1, 2, 10, 11 | 37, 38; 22. | .....         |
| 177     | con. 61                | Jesus washes his disciples' feet | Supper-       | "            | 17-20 [16    | 12-17            | 22. 7-18    | .....         |
| 178     | con. 62                | The breaking of bread—Judas goes | chamber       | "            | .....        | .....            | .....       | 13. 1-17      |
| 179     | con. 63                | Dispute for honours              | "             | "            | 21-26        | 18-22            | 19, 21-23   | 18-38         |
| 180     | .....                  | The blessing of the cup          | "             | "            | 27-29        | 23-25            | 24-38       | .....         |
| 181-183 | dis. 30                | The discourse of consolation     | "             | "            | .....        | .....            | 20          | .....         |
| 184     | .....                  | The Lord's own Prayer            | "             | "            | .....        | .....            | .....       | xiv. xv. xvi. |
| 185     | con. 64                | Third prophecy of Peter's denial | over Cedron   | "            | .....        | .....            | .....       | xvii.         |
| 186     | .....                  | The Agony                        | Gethsemane.   | " (night)    | 30-35        | 26-31            | 39          | 18. 1         |
| 187     | c. 65 m. 40            | Jesus apprehended                | "             | "            | 36-46        | 32-42            | 40-46       | .....         |
| 188     | con. 66                | Beginning of the day of the      | Pasion.       | Good-Frid    | 47-56        | 43-52            | 47-53       | 2-11          |
| 189     | .....                  | Private examination              | { h. priest's | ay, April 5  | .....        | .....            | .....       | [-24          |
| 190     | con. 67                | Peter's denial                   | { palace      | about 1 a.m. | 26. 57-68    | 53-65            | 54, 55, 68  | 12-16, 19     |
| 191     | .....                  | Legal trial and condemnation     | { temple      | about 2 a.m. | 69-75        | 66-72            | 54-62 [1    | 17, 18, 25-   |
| 192     | con. 68                | Judas's suicide                  | Temple        | about 3 a.m. | 27. 1, 2     | 15. 1            | 66-71; 23.  | [27           |
| aa 192  | .....                  | Jesus before Pilate in private   | Pila. palace  | about 5 a.m. | 3-10         | .....            | .....       | 28-40         |

| <i>Mir. Par.</i><br><i>Dis. Con.</i> | <i>Subject.</i>                                                 | <i>Place</i>           | <i>Time.</i>         | <i>Matt.</i>              | <i>Mark.</i> | <i>Luke</i> | <i>John</i>            |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 193                                  | Presentation to the people                                      | Pila. palace           | A.D. 30              | ch. ver.                  | ch. ver.     | ch. ver.    | ch. ver.               |
| 194                                  | Pilate on the judgment-seat                                     | "                      | G.Fri. 6 a.m.        | 27. 11-14                 | 16. 2-5      | 23. 2-7     | 19. 1-14               |
| 195                                  | Jesus before Herod                                              | Herod's pa.            |                      |                           |              | 8-12        |                        |
| 196                                  | Sentence by Pilate                                              | Pila. palace           |                      | 15-26                     | 6-15         | 13-25       | 14-16                  |
| bb 197                               | The way to execution                                            | Street.                | 8 a.m.               | 27-32                     | 16-21        | 26-32       | 16                     |
| 198                                  | The crucifixion                                                 | Calvary                | 9 a.m.               | 33-43                     | 22-32        | 33-38       | 17-24                  |
| 199                                  | The two thieves                                                 | "                      |                      | 44                        | 32           | 39-43       |                        |
| 200                                  | Jesus and his mother                                            | "                      |                      |                           |              |             | 25-27                  |
| 201                                  | Jesus yields up the ghost                                       | "                      | noon-3 p.m.          | 45-56                     | 33-41        | 44-49       | 28-30                  |
| 202                                  | The body pierced                                                | "                      |                      |                           |              |             | 31-37                  |
| 203                                  | The burial                                                      | "                      | Evening              | 57-61                     | 42-47        | 50-56       | 38-42                  |
| cc 204                               | The watch set—Fourth Passover                                   | Sepulchre              |                      | 62-66                     |              |             |                        |
| 205                                  | The Resurrection                                                | "                      | Satur. 6, 4          |                           |              |             |                        |
| 206                                  | The watch suborned                                              | Jerusalem              | Sun. 7, 4            | 28. 1-8                   | 16. 1-8      |             |                        |
| 207                                  | Johanna's party at the sepulchre                                | Sepulchre              | "                    | 11-15                     |              | 24. 1-9     |                        |
| 208                                  | Mary takes Pet. & John to the tomb                              | "                      | "                    |                           |              | 10-12       | 20. 1-10               |
| 209                                  | Jesus appears to M. Magd. (1st ap.)                             | "                      | "                    |                           | 9-11         |             | 11-18                  |
| 210                                  | To 2 discip. & Peter (2nd & 3rd ap.)                            | Emt, N. J'm.           | "                    |                           | 12, 13       | 13-35       |                        |
| 211                                  | To the Apos., twice (4th & 5th ap.)                             | Jerusalem              | "                    |                           | 14           | 36-43       | 19-29                  |
| 212                                  | To the women; and then to 500 at once (6th and 7th appearance.) | Jerusalem, & Galilee   | Su. 7, 4 & Su. 14, 4 | 28. 9, 10                 |              |             |                        |
| 213                                  | To seven disciples fishing (8th ap.)                            | Lake                   |                      | 16-20                     |              |             |                        |
| ee 214                               | The Ascension (9th & 10th app.)                                 | Jerusa. and N. Bethany | Th. 16, 5            | 1 Cor. xv. 7 Acts 1. 4-12 | 15-19        | 44-53       | 21. 1-24               |
| ff 215                               | Conclusion.                                                     |                        |                      |                           | 20           |             | [xxi. 25<br>20. 30, 31 |

THE  
COTTAGER'S GUIDE, &c.

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ONE HUNDRED & SEVENTY-SIXTH  
PORTION.

The last Supper prepared.—*Conversation, No. 60.*

PLACES.—*Bethany; and the Supper-chamber in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*Thursday in Passion week—The day before his death.*  
YEAR 30.

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I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of His Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvi. ver. 17—20.

St. Mark's Gospel, c. xiv. verses 12 to 17.

St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxii. ver. 7 to 18.

III. THE MEANINGS;

[There is no word used in this portion, the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

IV. THE EXPLANATION.

The time was now fast approaching, when the real Lamb of the passover was to be slain: He who was meant to be represented by those lambs which had been killed upon every celebration of the passover, since it was first appointed in Egypt. (See Vol. I. pages 130 & 132.) The feast of the passover, which lasted seven days, was to begin on

the following sabbath ; that is, on the Friday evening, at six o'clock. The different families of the Jews were each to kill their lamb, some time between three o'clock and six o'clock on that evening ; which is the time meant by the expression "between the two evenings," found in the margin, in the account of the first appointment of the passover. (Exod. xii. 6—10.) It was precisely at that time that our Lord Jesus Christ actually died upon the cross ; as we shall hereafter find.

As it was impossible that he should both keep the passover while living, and fulfil it by his death at the same time, he seems to have determined to keep the paschal supper one day before it was kept by the other Jews ; in order that the fulfilment of the type might take place precisely at the time when the Jews in general were engaged in the representation of it. As the paschal supper was eaten with bread which had been made without any barm or leaven, the passover was also called "the feast of unleavened bread."

On the Thursday morning therefore, our Lord spoke to Peter and John, desiring them to make the necessary preparations for himself and his disciples to eat the paschal supper that evening instead of the next. The disciples then inquired where they were to get things ready. He told Peter and John to go into Jerusalem, and that as soon as they had got into the city they would see a man coming towards them carrying a pitcher of water ; he told them to follow this man, and go after him into the house to which he went. They were to inquire for the person who owned this house, and to tell him, that "the master" sent him

a message ; to say that his time was near, and that he meant to come and keep the passover at his house together with his disciples. Peter and John were then to inquire for the best apartment, where it was customary to receive company. The owner of the house would lead them to a large room in the upper story properly furnished, and here it was that they were to make all necessary preparations for the intended purpose. Peter and John immediately went to Jerusalem, and every thing happened exactly as Jesus had foretold : accordingly they made preparation for the supper.

At the proper hour in the evening, Jesus arrived at this house, accompanied by the other ten apostles ; and the whole twelve sat down with him at table. Before beginning the supper, he told them how anxiously he had looked forward to partake with them of this paschal feast, before he himself was called upon to suffer ; for he declared to them that he would never eat of another passover until the great sacrifice which it represented should take place ; thereby opening and establishing God's kingdom of grace upon earth. He then took a cup of wine and said grace, after which he gave it to those who were with him, and bid each drink a portion of it, telling them that he would never taste wine again, until that kingdom of God should actually arrive ; thus strongly stating the near approach of the great atonement, which would render it unnecessary in future to shew it forth in the manner hitherto adopted at the paschal feast.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures, See No. II.

VOL. VI.

C

## VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. It is impossible to read this account, of our Lord's preparation for his own sacrifice, without being struck with the calmness with which he anticipated those sufferings, which must have been clearly present to his mind at the time of giving these orders. He expressed the earnest desire with which he had been looking forward to that moment ; He realized the fruit of his atonement, at the same time that he realized its agony : and we may be enabled, hereby to understand something of the feelings described by the Apostle when he says, " who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. xii. 2) : or by the prophet, in declaring " He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isa. liii. 11.) Thoughts such as these should not pass through our minds, without leading us to reflect upon the exceeding love of Jesus towards our souls, which could produce such a feeling, at such a time.

## QUESTIONS.

Do I feel that my sins had a share in requiring that atonement for which Jesus was thus preparing ?

How far am I grateful for that personal love towards me, which supported him with so much calmness in the prospect of his sufferings ?

2. The circumstances connected with the preparation of the paschal supper for our Lord, afford us another striking evidence of the providential power of Christ, and the minute arrangement of all things, to serve the purposes of God. A similar proof is afforded by the way in which the disciples were directed to procure the ass, upon which our Lord rode into Jerusalem. (Matt. xxi.



1—7, &c. See Vol. V. page 2.) As in that case, so also in this, the smallest things were employed as means of producing the end in view; proving the truth of that word of our Lord, that “even the very hairs of our head are all numbered.” (Luke xii. 7.) The accidental circumstance of a servant going to the well, to fetch a pitcher of water, was made the occasion of pointing out the house which Jesus intended to use; and His perfect knowledge beforehand of these little events, and of their exact agreement in time and place with the arrival of his disciples at Jerusalem, proves how he “upholds all things by the word of his power.” (Heb. i. 3.) The difference of five minutes delay, either in the man’s leaving the well to carry the water home, or in the walk of Peter and John to Jerusalem, would have made this arrangement fail; but it was ordered with such exactness that it could not fail: and the same is true of every providential arrangement in the affairs of christians. This is a most comforting truth, to those that know how to put their trust in that Saviour who can take advantage of the most trifling things, and turn them to the advantage of his people: and the proper effect of a belief of this truth is, to produce entire confidence in the care of the Lord respecting all outward things, so as to make them “work together for good,” and also to give us a cheerful contentment with the condition in which it has pleased God to place us.

## QUESTIONS.

Do I recognize and acknowledge the hand of God in the many small circumstances of my life, which work together for my good, however unimportant they may seem in themselves?

| Por.   | Mtr. Pa.<br>Dis. Con. | Subject.                                         | Place.                 | Time.     | Matt.          | Mark.      | Luke.               | John.    |
|--------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|----------------|------------|---------------------|----------|
|        |                       |                                                  |                        | A. D. 28  | ch. ver.       | ch. ver.   | ch. ver.            | ch. ver. |
| 69     | par. 4                | The mustard-seed                                 | Lake                   |           | 13. 31, 32     | 4. 30-32   |                     |          |
| 70     | par. 5                | The leaven                                       | "                      |           | 33-35          | 33, 34 [25 |                     |          |
| 71     | con. 16               | Concerning parables                              | Capernaum              |           | 36             | 10-13, 21- | [18<br>8. 9, 10, 16 |          |
| 72     | par. 6, 7             | The hid treasure, and pearl                      | "                      |           | 44-46          |            |                     |          |
| 73     | par. 8                | The drag-net                                     | "                      |           | 47-52          |            |                     |          |
| 74     | .....                 | The relations come again                         | "                      |           | [18-22         |            | 19-21               |          |
| 75     | con. 17               | Embarking, the scribe, the disciple              | "                      |           | 13. 53: viii.  | 35         |                     |          |
| 76     | mir. 15               | The storm subdued                                | Lake                   |           | 8. 23-27       | 36-41      | 22-25               |          |
| 77     | mir. 16               | The legion cast into the swine                   | Gadara                 |           | 28-34: ix      | 5. 1-20    | 26-39               |          |
| 78     | con. 18, 19           | On eating with sinners, & fasting                | Capernaum              |           | 9. 10-17 [1    | 21         | 40                  |          |
| 79     | mir. 17, 18           | Woman healed—Jairus's dau. rais.                 | "                      |           | 18-26          | 22-43      | 41-56               |          |
| 80     | mir. 19, 20           | 2 blind men and a demoniac healed.               | "                      |           | 27-34 [2       |            |                     |          |
| 81     | con. 20               | Visit to Nazareth—offence                        | Nazareth               |           | 13. 54-58 [5   | 6. 1-6     |                     |          |
| 82     | } dis. 8              | Mission of the Apostles, and charge              | Galilee                | A. D. 29  | 9. 35-38: x. 5 | 6-11       | 9. 1-5              |          |
| 83     |                       | Charge concluded—Third circuit                   | "                      | Feb.      | x. 16-42: xi.  | 12, 13     | 6                   |          |
| 84     | .....                 | Herod's conscience alarmed                       | "                      |           | 14. 1-12 [1    | 14-29      | 7-9                 |          |
| 85     | mir. 21               | 5,000 miraculously fed<br><i>Third Passover.</i> | Des. Decap.            | 5, 4 Th.  | 13-21          | 30-44      | 10-17               | 6. 1-13  |
| 86     | mir. 22               | Jesus walks on the water                         | Lake                   |           | 22-33          | 45-52      |                     | 14-21    |
| 87     | .....                 | He returns to Capernaum                          | "                      |           | 34-36          | 53-56      |                     | 22-21    |
| 88, 89 | dis. 9 con. 21        | Discourse in the synagogue                       | Capernaum              | 7, 4 S.   |                |            |                     | 25-74    |
| 90     | con. 22               | Pharisees reproved for traditions                | "                      |           | 15. 1-9        | 7. 1-13    |                     |          |
| 91     | con. 23               | What defiles                                     | " [& Sid.              |           | 10-20          | 14-23      |                     |          |
| 92     | mir. 23               | The woman of Canaan                              | coa. of Tyre           |           | 21-28          | 24-30      |                     |          |
| 93     | mir. 24               | A deaf and tongue-tied man healed                | Decapolis              |           | 29-31          | 31-37      |                     |          |
| 94     | mir. 25               | 4,000 miraculously fed                           | "                      |           | 32-39          | 8. 1-10    |                     |          |
| 95     | con. 24               | A sign from the sky refused                      | "                      |           | 16. 1-4        | 11, 12     |                     |          |
| 96     | con. 25               | Leaven of the Pharisees, hypocrisy               | Magdala                |           | 4-12           | 13-21      |                     |          |
| 97     | mir. 26               | A blind man healed                               | { Beths. nr.<br>Decap. |           |                | 22-26      |                     |          |
| 98     | con. 26               | Peter's confession of Christ [rebuk.             | { nr. Cesar.           | 20, 5 Su. | 13-20          | 27-30      | 9. 18-21            |          |
| 99     | con. 27, 28           | Jesus' 1st proph. of his death, Peter            | { Philippi             |           | 21-28          | 31—ix. 1   | 22-27               |          |

| Por.     | Mtr. Par<br>Dis. Con.        | Subject.                                                            | Place.               | Time.             | Matt.    | Mark.    | Luke.    | John.      |
|----------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| q        | 100                          | The Transfiguration                                                 | Mt. Tab. Ga.         | A.D. 29           | ch. ver. | ch. ver. | ch. ver. | ch. ver.   |
| 101      | con. 29                      | Of the resurrection, and of Elias                                   | Nr. "                | 27, 5 Su.         | 17. 1-8  | 9. 2-8   | 9. 28-36 | .....      |
| 102      | mir. 28                      | The demoniac boy healed                                             | Galilee              |                   | 9-13     | 9-13     | .....    | .....      |
| 103      | con. 30                      | The second prophecy of the crucifixion                              | Capernaum            |                   | 14-21    | 14-29    | 37-42    | .....      |
| 104      | mir. 29                      | The tribute money procured                                          |                      |                   | 22, 23   | 30-32    | 43-45    | 7. 1       |
| 105      | dis. 10                      | Reproof of contention for honours                                   |                      |                   | 24-27    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
| 106      | {                            | The dispute refer. to J., his decision                              | "                    |                   | .....    | 33-50    | 46-50    | .....      |
| 107      | {                            | Christians not to be despised                                       | "                    | 18. 1-9           | .....    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
| 108      | {                            | Disputes referred to the Church                                     | "                    | 10-14             | .....    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
| 109      | {                            | The king and his debtor                                             | "                    | 15-20             | .....    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
| r        | par. 9                       | The king and his debtor                                             | "                    | 21-35             | .....    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
| 110      | Two years                    | and a half of our Lord's ministry completed.                        | Jerusalem            | 15, 10 M.         | .....    | .....    | .....    | 7. 2-13    |
| 111, 112 | con. 31                      | Feast of Tabernacles—Jesus there                                    | Jerusalem            |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 14-viii. 1 |
| 113      | con. 32, 33                  | Jesus teaches in the temple                                         | " Temple             |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 8. 2-11    |
| 114-116  | con. 34 [30<br>c. 35, 36 mi. | The adulteress in the temple                                        | " "                  |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 12-59      |
| 117      | mir. 31                      | Teaching in the temple resumed                                      | " "                  | 18, 10 Th.        | .....    | .....    | .....    | 9. 1-41    |
| 118      | par. 10                      | Sight given to the man born blind                                   | " "                  |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 10. 1-21   |
| s        | con. 37                      | The Good Shepherd                                                   | " "                  |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
| t        | con. 38                      | (Here nothing recorded during<br>Divinity of Jesus—feast of Dedica. | two months.) A.D. 30 |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 22-42      |
| 120      | mir. 32                      | Lazarus raised                                                      | Jeru. & Jord.        | January           | .....    | .....    | .....    | 11. 1-44   |
| 121      | .....                        | High priest prophesied of Jesus' death                              | Bethany              |                   | .....    | .....    | .....    | 45-54      |
| u        | con. 38                      | Final and public journey, began                                     | Jeru., Ephm.         | before His death. | .....    | .....    | .....    | .....      |
| 122      | con. 39                      | Jesus sets forth through Samaria                                    | two months           |                   | .....    | .....    | 9. 51-62 | .....      |
| 123      | dis. 12                      | The mission of the 70 [circuit                                      | Samaria              |                   | .....    | .....    | 10. 1-16 | .....      |
| 124      | con. 39                      | The 70 return. 4th and last general                                 | Capernaum            | February          | .....    | .....    | 17-24    | .....      |
| 125      | pa. 11 c. 40                 | The good Samaritan                                                  | "                    | March             | .....    | .....    | 25-37    | .....      |
| 126      | con. 41                      | Jesus in Martha's house                                             | Galilee              |                   | .....    | .....    | 38-42    | .....      |
| 127      | dis. 13                      | How to pray                                                         | "                    |                   | .....    | .....    | 11. 1-13 | .....      |
| 128      | m. 33 d. 14                  | A dumb spirit cast out                                              | "                    |                   | .....    | .....    | 14-26    | .....      |
| 129      | dis. 15                      | A sign again refused                                                | "                    |                   | .....    | .....    | 27-36    | .....      |
| 130      | dis. 16                      | Pharisees and lawyers reproved                                      | "                    |                   | .....    | .....    | 37-54    | .....      |

| <i>Por.</i> | <i>Mir.Par.<br/>Dia.Con.</i> | <i>Subject.</i>                    | <i>Place.</i>                                        | <i>Time.</i>     | <i>Matt.</i> | <i>Mark.</i> | <i>Luke.</i> | <i>John.</i>  |
|-------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
|             |                              |                                    | Galilee                                              | A.D. 30<br>March | ch. ver.     | ch. ver.     | ch. ver.     | ch. ver.      |
| 131         | dis. 17                      | Warning against hypocrisy          | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 12. 1-12     | .....         |
| 132         | d. 18 p. 12                  | The rich man's folly               | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 13-34        | .....         |
| 133         | par. 13                      | The waiting servants               | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 35-48        | .....         |
| 134         | dis. 19                      | The discourse concluded            | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 49-54        | .....         |
| 135         | par. 14                      | The barren fig-tree                | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 13. 1-9      | .....         |
| 136         | m. 34 p. 4, 5                | Woman healed on the sabbath day    | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 10-21        | .....         |
| 137         | dis. 20                      | Will few be saved ?                | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 22-30        | .....         |
| 138         | c. 42 m. 35                  | Jesus warned of Herod—dropsy       | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 31-xiv. 6    | .....         |
| 139         | dis. 21                      | Forward pride reproved [cured]     | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 14. 7-14     | .....         |
| 140         | par. 15                      | The great Supper                   | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 15-24        | .....         |
| 141         | dis. 22                      | Count the cost                     | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 25-36        | .....         |
| 142         | par. 16, 17                  | Lost sheep—lost piece of money     | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 16. 1-10     | .....         |
| 143         | par. 18                      | The prodigal son                   | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 11-32        | .....         |
| 144         | par. 19                      | The unjust steward                 | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 16. 1-13     | .....         |
| 145         | p. 20 d. 23                  | Covetousness—rich man & Lazarus    | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 14-31        | .....         |
| 146         | d. 24 m. 36                  | Snares—faith—duty—ten lepers       | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | 17. 1-19     | .....         |
| 147         | dis. 25                      | Kingdom of God & Christ's coming   | Perea                                                |                  | .....        | .....        | 20-37        | .....         |
| 148         | par. 21, 22                  | Importunate widow—Pharisee and     | "                                                    |                  | 19. 1, 2     | 10. 1        | 18. 1-14     | .....         |
| 149         | con. 43                      | Unlawfulness of divorce [Publ.]    | "                                                    |                  | .....        | .....        | .....        | .....         |
| 150         | con. 44                      | Children brought to Christ         | "                                                    |                  | 8-12         | 2-12         | .....        | .....         |
| 151         | con. 45                      | The rich ruler                     | "                                                    |                  | 13-15        | 18-16        | 15-17        | .....         |
| 152         | c. 46 p. 23                  | Labourers in the vineyard          | "                                                    | 29. 3            | 16-26        | 17-27        | 18-27        | .....         |
| 153         | con. 47, 48                  | Third prophecy of the crucifixion  | "                                                    | "                | 27-xx. 16    | 28-31        | 28-30        | .....         |
| 154         | mir. 37, 38                  | Two blind men cured                | Judea                                                | "                | 20. 17-28    | 32-45        | 31-34        | .....         |
| 155         | con. 49                      | Jesus visits Zaccheus              | Nr. Jericho                                          | "                | 23-34        | 46-52        | 35-xix. 1    | .....         |
| 156         | par. 24                      | Jesus visits Zaccheus              | between                                              | "                | .....        | .....        | 19. 2-10     | .....         |
| 157         | con. 50                      | Jesus anointed                     | Jeru. & Jer.                                         | "                | .....        | .....        | 11-27        | .....         |
|             |                              | Jesus anointed                     | Bethany                                              | 30. 3            | 26. 6-13     | 14. 9-9      | 28           | 11. 55-xli. 8 |
|             |                              | <i>Beginning of Passion Week.</i>  |                                                      | March 31.        | [17          |              |              |               |
| w 158       | con. 51, 52                  | Triumphant entry into Jerusalem    | Bethy. Jeru.                                         | Su. & M.         | 21. 1-11, 14 | 11. 1-11     | 29-44        | 12. 9-19      |
| 159         | con. 53                      | The voice from heaven              | Temple                                               | Mon. 1. 4        | [19          |              | .....        | 90-96         |
| x 160       | mir. 39                      | Bar. figtree—temple again cleansed | bet <sup>n</sup> . B <sup>y</sup> . J <sup>m</sup> . | Tues. 2. 4       | 18-22, 12,   | 12-19        | 45-48        | .....         |

| Por.    | Mir. Par.<br>Dis. Con. | Subject.                           | Place          | Time             | Matt.        | Mark             | Luke        | John          |
|---------|------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| y 161   | d. 26 c. 54            | Jesus asked for his authority      | Temple         | A. D. 30         | ch. ver.     | ch. ver.         | ch. ver.    | ch. ver.      |
| 162     | par. 25                | The Vineyard let out               | "              | Wed. 8, 4        | 11. 23-32    | 11. 20-33        | 20. 1-8     | .....         |
| 163     | par. 26                | The wedding garment                | "              | "                | 21. 33-46    | 12. 1-12         | 9-19        | .....         |
| 164     | con. 55                | As to paying taxes                 | "              | "                | 22. 1-14     | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 165     | con. 56                | Doctrine of the Resurrection       | "              | "                | 15-22        | 13-17            | 20-26       | .....         |
| 166     | con. 57                | Which is the great Commandment?    | "              | "                | 23-33        | 18-27            | 27-40       | .....         |
| 167     | con. 58                | Christ, the Lord of David          | "              | "                | 34-40        | 28-34            | .....       | .....         |
| 168     | con. 59                | The widow's mite                   | "              | "                | 41-46        | 35-40            | 41-47       | .....         |
| 169     | dis. 27                | Continued unbelief of the Jews     | "              | "                | .....        | 41-44            | 21. 1-4     | .....         |
| 170     | dis. 28                | The reproof of the eight woes      | "              | "                | .....        | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 171     | d. 29                  | Prophecy upon the Mount            | "              | "                | 23.          | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 172     | " p. 27                | " — The ten virgins                | Mount of       | "                | 24. 1-44[-13 | 13. 1-37         | 5-36        | .....         |
| 173     | " p. 28                | " — The talents                    | Olives         | "                | 45-51; 25. 1 | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 174     | "                      | " — Separation of the nations      | "              | "                | 25. 14-30    | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 175     | .....                  | The conspiracy—Judas bribed        | "              | "                | 31-46        | .....            | 1-6         | .....         |
| 176     | con. 60                | The last supper prepared           | Jerusalem      | "                | 26. 1-5, 14- | 14. 1, 2, 10, 11 | 37, 38; 22. | .....         |
| 177     | con. 61                | Jesus washes his disciples' feet   | Beth Jeru.     | Thurs. 4, 4      | 17-20[16     | 12-17            | 22. 7-18    | .....         |
| 178     | con. 62                | The breaking of bread—Judas goes   | Supper-        | "                | 21-26        | 18-22            | 19, 21-23   | 13. 1-17      |
| 179     | con. 63                | Dispute for honours                | chamber        | "                | .....        | .....            | 24-38       | 18-38         |
| 180     | .....                  | The blessing of the cup            | "              | "                | 27-29        | 23-25            | 20          | .....         |
| 181-183 | dis. 30                | The discourse of consolation       | "              | "                | .....        | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 184     | .....                  | The Lord's own Prayer              | "              | "                | .....        | .....            | .....       | xiv. xv. xvi. |
| 185     | con. 64                | Third prophecy of Peter's denial   | over Cedron    | "                | .....        | .....            | .....       | xvii.         |
| 186     | .....                  | The Agony                          | Gethsemane.    | " (night)        | 30-35        | 26-31            | 39          | 18. 1         |
| 187     | c. 65 m. 40            | Jesus apprehended                  | "              | "                | 36-46        | 32-42            | 40-46       | .....         |
| 188     | con. 66                | <i>Beginning of the day of the</i> | <i>Pasion.</i> | <i>Good-Frid</i> | 47-56        | 49-52            | 47-53       | 2-11          |
| 189     | con. 67                | Private examination                | { h. priest's  | ay, April 5      | .....        | .....            | .....       | .....         |
| 190     | con. 67                | Peter's denial                     | { palace       | about 1 a.m.     | 53-65        | 53-65            | 54, 55, 63  | 12-16, 19     |
| 191     | .....                  | Legal trial and condemnation       | Temple         | about 2 a.m.     | 66-75        | 66-72            | 56-62 [1    | 17, 18, 25-   |
| 192     | con. 68                | Judas's suicide                    | Temple         | about 3 a.m.     | 27. 1. 2     | 15. 1            | 66-71; 23.  | [27           |
| aa      | .....                  | Jesus before Pilate in private     | Pila. palace   | about 5 a.m.     | 3-10         | .....            | .....       | 28-40         |

will not make it more tempting ; but the danger will rather arouse the heart to be more watchful against that which it hates. A clear understanding of this would tend to lessen the power of temptation. It is the planning before-hand which renders opportunity dangerous ;—it is the secret dwelling upon a sinful thought, and nourishing a sinful wish, and sighing after a forbidden enjoyment, which makes it impossible to resist the temptation when opportunity offers. Satan prepares the sinner for the opportunity by idle and sinful desires ; and then prepares the opportunity for the sinner, in order to call those desires into action. The sinner lets Satan into his heart, by his secret plannings of a sin ; and then Satan seizes the first occasion of putting it into the sinner's heart, to do what he had planned.

## QUESTIONS.

Do I indulge in thinking how, under certain circumstances, I should like to do something which I know to be wrong ?

Do I fancy there is no harm in such thoughts ?

When tempting circumstances occur, do I imagine the opportunity to be any excuse for doing wrong ?

2. As the time drew near at which Jesus knew that he was to leave his disciples, he seemed to feel more acutely for the desolate condition in which they would be placed. His love, always equally strong, then came out more powerfully ; as an elder brother would feel upon parting from those whom he left in ignorance, youth, and inexperience. He knew their need, which they did not : and being fully aware of the constant tendency which exists in every one, even of his own disciples, to exalt and indulge self at the expence of others, he employed the solemn moments of this affectionate farewell to set them an

example, and urge upon them a precept, which (if fully acted upon) would prevent all the evils resulting from this selfish tendency in man's nature. He shewed them how ready he himself was to do painful and humbling offices for his disciples; and enjoined them to go and do likewise, not thinking themselves demeaned by doing that which their Master had done before them. Nothing is more wanting in the Church of Christ, than the habitual practice of a self-denying humility, which makes us ready to do any thing for a disciple of Christ: yet this is what Jesus requires of all who would be truly his servants. To be willing to be low and little thought of, while others are placed above us, is the essence of this command and example of our Lord;—to be active in serving others, even at much pains, and with little honour, is the practical effect which they should produce in us.

## QUESTIONS.

Am I soon offended if I am not treated with what I consider to be the respect due to me?

Do I find it difficult to agree in praising others who are placed above me?

In what instances have I shewn that I am ready to take trouble for the sake of shewing kindness to others, for which I am likely to be looked down upon?

3. There is a powerful application to every one, in those words of our Lord to Peter—"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." The cleansing by the blood of Christ is absolutely necessary for every sinner; and it must be personally applied by Him, who is the Author and the finisher of our faith. (Heb. xii. 2.) To have no part with Jesus, is to have no share in his blessedness, and to be disowned by Him in the great

day : and they only who have " washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," will be partakers with him, and enter into the joy of their Lord. (Rev. vii. 14-17. Matt. xxv. 21, 23.) It should be the great object of our life, to secure the application of this atoning blood ; without which there can be no reasonable ground of hope. " He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit," means that a person once washed in the morning only required to be cleansed from time to time during the day of his hourly defilement in his ordinary work ; and the Christian, to whom the Atonement has been savingly applied to wash him of his sins, will have abundant occasion to observe how every hour's exercise in life soils his feet, and brings with it the need of coming afresh to the fountain that is open for sin and uncleanness.

#### QUESTIONS.

In my hope of attaining to future blessedness, on what do I lay most stress ? on my good conduct here ? or on the washing of my soul by the blood of Jesus Christ ?

Do I rest satisfied with thinking I am a christian ? or do I constantly seek to renew the power of the Atonement for cleansing me from the defilements of my daily walk in life ?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for such a real hatred of all sin, that you may never indulge a desire for it ; and that no circumstances may give sin power over you, by making it easy to be committed.

2. Pray to be so humbled in your own conceit, that you may not be offended at any outward circumstances which tend to lower you : and that you may be ready to perform any kindness for christians, however troublesome or degrading.

3. Pray for a constant renewal of the power of the Atonement, to wash you from your sins ; and for a sense of the daily need of such washing, for your best endeavour to walk as a christian.



## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O God, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, I beseech thee to give me, for Christ's sake, thy Spirit of purity and holiness ; that I may truly hate sin, and that its temptations may not become more enticing, from being convenient, or pressing. Guard me against the beginnings of evil ; cleanse my thoughts, and let no encouraged wish for what is wrong prepare me to fall. (2) Humble me in my own conceit ; save me from the inward pride, which takes offence at outward slights from man ; and make me so to feel my own unworthiness, that I may be ready to submit to any thing which may be needful to serve any of Christ's members upon earth. (3) O Lord Jesus, I acknowledge that it was my sins which humbled thee, even to the death upon the cross ; and I come to thee for salvation from the guilt of those sins. Do thou wash me, and I shall be clean. Cleanse thou me, and I shall be white as snow. Teach me to feel the sad defilement of my daily walk in the world ; and open to me the continual cleansing of that fountain where alone sin can be purged, even thy powerful and blessed Atonement. Grant this for the sake of thine own sufferings, and for the glory of thine own name. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

## ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-EIGHTH PORTION.

The breaking of bread—Judas departs.—*Conversation, No. 62.*

PLACE.—*The Supper-chamber in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*Thursday in Passion Week—the day before his death.*  
Year 30.

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. xxvi. verse 26.

St. Mark's Gospel, chapter xiv. verse 22.

St. Luke's Gospel, c. xii. ver. 19, and 21 to 23.  
then St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvi. v. 21 to 25.

St. Mark's Gospel, chapter xiv. verses 18 to 21.  
and St. John's Gospel, chap. xiii. ver. 18 to 38.

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

JOHN xiii. verse

29. the bag *means here* the purse

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

While Jesus and his Apostles were still at Supper, he took some of the bread which was placed on the table ; and having given thanks to God for it, he blessed it, and broke it into pieces, distributing them amongst the disciples ; saying at the same time, " Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken (or given) for you, this do in remembrance of me." As though he had said, " hitherto you have had the body of the Paschal Lamb, as an appointed means of shewing your

faith in the Christ who was to come. But now Christ himself—the true Lamb of God—is about to be killed once for all; and in future, your faith will not be a faith which looks forward to an atonement yet to be made, but one which looks back, remembering that it has been made: instead therefore of killing a lamb to represent my death, let the breaking of a piece of bread be the outward token, whereby you may remember the wounding of my body even to death.”

Jesus did not immediately add the second part of that holy ordinance, by which Christians were to commemorate his death; but having given a piece of bread to Judas, as well as to the rest of the Apostles, he thought proper to warn them of the treachery which was at that very moment being planned. He said that the person who would betray him, was at this time joining in the sacred meal: and that, though his death would certainly take place in the manner which had been determined in the mind of God, yet the person by whose means his murder would be brought about, would assuredly receive the dreadful punishment justly due to such a crime. What he had said before was not therefore equally applicable to them all; he knew the real character of the persons, whom he had chosen to be his disciples. He had permitted one to be among the number of his Apostles, and to be present at that Supper, in whom would be fulfilled what the Holy Spirit had inspired David to write down in the forty-first Psalm (verse 9), “He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me.” Jesus told them this before the dreadful treachery happened, in order that, when it had actually taken place,

his disciples might believe that He was One who knoweth all things. (John viii. 58, 59.) And having thus explained the reason why he had allowed such a mixture of evil with good amongst his Apostles, he took the opportunity of shewing, that this made no difference as to the exercise of the ministry with which he had charged all his Apostles, even Judas ; for that the power of the ministry did not depend upon the goodness of the minister, but upon his being sent by Christ, who was the Son of God. This he did by assuring them, that he that receiveth *whomsoever* Jesus sends, receiveth Jesus himself, and in him, he receiveth God himself.

The thought of this ungrateful and hardened conduct in one of his own Apostles, weighed heavily upon our Lord's mind, and greatly troubled him. He still dwelt upon the subject, and told the Apostles in yet plainer terms, that one of them who was now at table with him would betray him. At this they all looked at each other with trembling and doubt, and began to inquire amongst themselves, whom he could mean. With sorrowful hearts, fearing the possibility of such a thing, first one asked him, "Is it I Lord?" and then another put the same question, "Is it I?" He did not answer any one in particular, but said that it was one of his Apostles who were partaking of the same dish with him : and then repeated the awful warning he had just before given ;—that the Son of Man should indeed be killed, as it had been declared in the Scriptures ; but a fearful "woe" should attend the man who was the means of causing that death, by betraying him into the hands of his enemies—it would have been good for

that man, if he had never been born. Jesus had shewn particular affection for the Apostle John, who was placed next to him at this Paschal Supper ; and from the position of the couches round the table, the head of John rested on the bosom of his Master. Simon Peter was lying not far off from them ; and he made signs to John to ask our Lord who it was that was meant. John complied with his desire, and asked Jesus to tell them, who the person was of whom He had spoken. Jesus told them that the person who would betray him, was the man to whom he should give a morsel of bread after dipping it in the dish. He immediately took a piece of bread, and dipping it in the dish which was before him, he gave it to Judas Iscariot. When this had taken place, Satan entered into the heart of Judas, and took full possession of it. Jesus spoke to him and said, " what thou intendest to do, do at once." None of the other Apostles understood the meaning of what was said ; and some of them thought he only gave some directions about expences, because Judas had charge of what money the whole had amongst them. Judas had been silent before, when the other Apostles had asked each for himself who it was that would betray our Lord : but now his conscience was roused by what Jesus had said, and he put the same question as the other disciples had done, " Is it I ?" To this Jesus answered plainly, that it was he ; and then Judas, stirred up by the devil, left the room late in the evening.

As soon as Judas was gone, Jesus spoke freely to his disciples of his approaching sufferings ; which however would only seem to set forth both the glory of God, and his own glory as Mediator

in the flesh. He addressed them affectionately, and told them that it was but a little time before he should leave them; and soon they would seek for him, without being able to follow him where he was going. After this warning, he gave them what he called a new commandment. He charged them to love one another, and to measure their affection towards each other, by that which he had shewn for them. He said that the mark by which all people should know who were Christians, and who were not, should be the love with which they loved one another.

The Apostle Peter took this occasion to refer to what Jesus had said as to leaving them, and asked where he was going. Our Lord answered by saying, that he was going where Peter could not follow him at that time; but that he should come after him at a future time. Peter's pride was offended at this, and he asked why he could not follow him at once; for he was ready to lay down his life for his Master. Jesus however warned him of his weakness; assuring him that before the next morning-dawn, when the cock would crow, he would three times have denied that he knew any thing of Jesus.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures: see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. We have in this portion an account of the appointment of one part of the Lord's Supper. This subject affords most important and practical applications: but our Lord did not complete the appointment of the whole ordinance until "after Supper;" when he added the use of the cup to the eating of the bread before commanded: it will

therefore be better to defer the application of this whole subject, till a future portion (the 180th.)

We may however observe here that Judas only partook of the first part of the Sacrament, by eating bread with him against whom he was lifting up his heel. It appears that this very act had the effect of hardening his heart ; so that he gave way to the devil, and went forth to perform the wicked deed he had before planned. There had seemed to be still a conscious feeling within him ; for, when all the apostles asked Jesus whether he alluded to them, Judas remained to the last before he put the question. But that feeling of conscience was speedily overcome : for when the Lord's answer shewed him that his plans were known, instead of being ashamed of his conduct and acknowledging his sin, (which would have been the effect of a conscience properly awakened) he only became more hardened ; so that he left the company and immediately acted upon his guilty intentions. Every feeling of conscience should be carefully watched ; if we neglect those signs within us, which point out the sinfulness of sin, we may go on from hard to harder, until we become capable of things which we should have shrunk from in an earlier period of a sinful course. Judas leaving the Supper-chamber after partaking of the bread in the Lord's Supper, without waiting for the wine, may suggest the case of those who, being led to attend the Lord's table by false or secondary motives once or twice, turn away, and do not continue to shew forth the Lord's death till he come. Such persons go into worldly company, and with the name of christian upon them, they betray the Lord to his enemies, in order to obtain the worldly

advantages or enjoyments; even as Judas gained his thirty pieces of silver. Being in this spirit he got harm rather than good from partaking of the Lord's Supper: and so the Church teaches (in the 29th Article), that "the wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ: but rather, to their condemnation, do eat and drink the sign or Sacrament of so great a thing."

QUESTIONS.

Have I been formerly a communicant, and have I left off going to the Lord's Supper? If so, why did I join at first? and why have I now turned away from it?

Was it in order that I might go on in any sinful indulgence?

Have I taken heed to the suggestions of conscience? or have I silenced its voice, and continued in the sin?

2. As a contrast to the smothering of Judas's conscience under a sense of known sin, we may observe the movements of conscience of a different kind in the other apostles. Jesus told them, that one out of the twelve would betray him; each of the eleven disciples had an uneasy feeling that it might possibly be himself. A sense of weakness—a remembrance of many things in the life of each, which might bring to the mind the thought that such a thing was not absolutely impossible,—these produced a diffidence and an alarm, which made each one ask, "Is it I?" Such is the working of a right conscience; a sense of the original corruption of his nature, the thought of many weaknesses, and the remembrance of many secret leanings towards sin, which make a fall by no means an impossibility; these produce a trembling and doubtfulness, and excite us to



the painful work of self-examination, under a sense of the presence of Christ, who knoweth the secrets of the heart. "Is it I, Lord?" is the language of the heart; especially when we meet that Lord in spirit at that Table, where he supplies his people with the bread that endureth unto everlasting life.

## QUESTIONS.

Am I sensible of my great liability to fall into sin?

Do I habitually enter upon the work of self-examination, before partaking of the Lord's Supper?

3. Jesus took this occasion to command the constant exercise of love between christians; which should be drawn forth more particularly, when they join together in commemorating the highest proof of our Lord's love for his people, as in the great Atonement by his death upon the Cross. In appointing the memorial of that love, he gave the new commandment that we should love one another. In that Atonement also, God glorified himself by the union of holiness and love; and christians display some of the beams of that glory, when they are led by the Spirit of Christ to overcome all the selfishness which would prevent them from loving one another, in the way that Christ loved them.

## QUESTIONS.

Is there any person towards whom I find it difficult to feel the love of a christian?

What steps have I taken to overcome such a feeling? and how far have I succeeded?

By what means do I evidently shew that I am striving to obey Christ's new commandment, to love all christians?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for a lively conscience to be alarmed at the approach of sin, and for a willing heart to follow its suggestions.

2. Pray for a spirit of self-examination, and for a hearty desire to continue constantly in seeking strength by the appointed means of the Lord's Supper.

3. Pray for a spirit of love towards all men, and especially towards all the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O gracious God, and merciful Father, grant I beseech thee, that my conscience may be ever enlightened by thy Holy Spirit, and quickened to discern and shrink from sin; give me a willingness to acknowledge my faults when suggested by my conscience, and to turn from them with all my heart. (2) O Thou unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, teach me; search and try my ways, and the inward motions of my actions; that knowing my great weakness, and the deep corruption of my nature, I may ever be alive to the danger of sin, and of betraying thee before a wicked world. May I ever continue to seek thy help in thy appointed means of grace; specially at thy Holy table, where I desire to shew forth thy death, even unto the end of my life. Give me grace to perceive the blessedness of thy mercy, in appointing such helps to our weakness, without allowing my mind to be clouded by any thought of the instruments, which in thy Providence thou art pleased to employ. (3) Give me a large Spirit of love, that I may be able to fulfil that new commandment thou gavest at thy holy Supper. Teach me to love all men, my neighbour as myself; but to bear such love as thine, more especially to them that are of the household of faith. Hear, O Saviour, and answer my imperfect petitions. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

# ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINTH PORTION.

The dispute for honors—*Conversation, No. 63.*

PLACE.—*The Supper-chamber in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*Thursday in Passion Week—the day before his death.*  
*Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxii. ver. 24 to 38.

## III. THE MEANINGS;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

LUKE xxii. verse

24. a strife *means here* a dispute  
     accounted ..... looked upon as [thy  
 25. called benefactors .. honoured as praisewor-  
 32. converted ..... turned again to God  
 35. lacked ye ..... .. were you in want of

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

WHILE our Lord was speaking to Peter, the other Apostles were engaged in a conversation amongst themselves, the subject of which was, who was to have the highest place in that kingdom of heaven, which Jesus had assured them was now so near at hand. Their notions concerning this kingdom were very far from the truth: and the question

of their future superiority one above another, was eagerly talked over and disputed about. Jesus told them that they were mistaken in supposing that the kingdom of heaven, of which he had spoken, was of the same nature as the kingdoms of this world. Earthly governors, exercising authority over the people, are rewarded with earthly honour : but those who were to be the greatest amongst the Apostles must humbly consider themselves as the least ; and the chief of them should consider himself as a servant. (2 Cor. iv. 5.) Jesus enforced this by putting them in mind that a master is greater than a servant ; and yet He, the Master, had acted towards them the part of a servant, at the very meal at which they were then engaged. (John xiii. 4, 5.)

Having thus mildly reproved them, and corrected the mistake into which they had fallen, he thought proper to encourage them under the difficulties they were about to experience, by telling them something of the exceeding great honour prepared for them in the end. They had continued with him in his trials and distress up to that time, although Judas had left him (Matt. xxiv. 13) : and He would appoint for them the power and honour of kings, in the same way that God the Father had appointed that power and honour for himself. They, like him, must wait the appointed time, and go through the appointed sufferings ; but in the end, when he shall come in his glory, they shall be received as his friends and brethren, and shall have the kingly power to govern the twelve tribes of the people of Israel. (Rev. iii. 21 ; v. 10.)

When Jesus had thus put an end to the unamiable dispute between the disciples in general, he renewed the subject upon which he had been warning Peter. Addressing him in a compassionate manner, he told him that the devil was busy in endeavouring to ensnare the Apostles; and that this was permitted in order that it might be seen who were the true, and who were the false disciples; just as wheat is sifted in a sieve, to separate it from the chaff. But he added that he had prayed for Peter, that his faith might not fail; and then, taking it as certain that his prayer would be answered, he charged him, when he had repented, to strengthen his brethren. Peter's proud notions of his own power were not yet brought down; and he answered that neither the fear of imprisonment, nor of death even, would prevent him from going wherever his master went. Upon this our Lord repeated the warning he had already given him once before. He said that before the very next morning Peter would have three times denied that he knew him.

Jesus took this opportunity of explaining to his Apostles the difference between the manner in which their ministry would be in future received, and that in which it had been received when he had sent them forth to preach, during his own ministry upon earth. (Matt. x. 9, 10. Luke x. 4.) Upon the former occasion, he had told them to make no provision for their wants: and yet they had found that the people amongst whom they preached had freely supplied them with all things necessary. It would however be very different in future; the opposition against his

Gospel would be so great, that they would not find themselves generally received as before: and therefore he directed them to use all prudent means to provide what they would require, both for their support, and also for their protection. If any of them had any money, he was to make use of it carefully, and also of such necessities of life as he might possess: and if a man had no sword or means of defence, he must inconvenience himself in other respects, in order to procure one. They were to expect the fulfilment of that prophecy which foretold that Christ would be treated as an evil doer (Isaiah liii. 12); and therefore the preachers of his Gospel would also be considered in the same light: for all that had been foretold about him would surely come to pass. The Apostles remarked to him that there were two of them already armed with swords: but he told them that it was not necessary to pursue the subject any further.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture, See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. It is hardly possible to have given a greater proof of the weakness of man's heart, and his inattention to the instructions and example of Christ, than that which is seen in the conduct of the Apostles upon this occasion. Jesus had just given them the most perfect lesson of humility, and had taught them in plain words how to apply it. He had afterwards most affectionately charged them to love one another, and make their mutual love a mark of belonging to him. And yet the very first moment they had an opportunity of

conversing together, after these instructions had been given them, they forgot them both ; and gave way to the two evils against which he had warned them—pride and strife. It should always be remembered, that the Apostles were not at that time under the same powerful influence of the Holy Spirit, which they afterwards received ; for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit had not yet taken place, because that Jesus was not yet glorified (John vii. 39) : they were therefore now shewing the corrupt state of man's nature. We who live in the day of the Holy Ghost are much more guilty when we give way to this corruption, after knowing the power of that divine Spirit ; by which these very Apostles were afterwards enabled to manifest the complete subduing, both of their pride and their angry strife. Our Lord's manner of rebuking, and at the same time encouraging them, is extremely affecting ; and shews the tenderness with which he makes allowance for the infirmities of those who sincerely love him. (Heb. iv. 15.)

## QUESTIONS.

In what respects have I shewn any desire to place myself before others ?

What strife have I entered into to obtain marks of respect or consideration ?

2. It is fearful to reflect on the malice of that evil spirit, who is ever on the watch, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter v. 8), and whose most earnest desire is to ensnare the disciples of Christ into sin. But he is permitted to try them with his temptations, in order that the Church of Christ may be sifted, and that false professors of religion may be manifested by the way in which

they submit to Satan's power. We see the effect of this in the case of the Apostle Judas : and we may also gather from what our Saviour said to Peter, how it is that real christians, though they learn their weakness from the attacks of Satan, are yet preserved from giving themselves up to his power, as Judas did. Christ prays for his true people that their faith fail not ; and his prayer prevails at the throne of grace. This point which he now directed to Peter only, he afterwards applied to all true believers, when in his prayer he said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." There is scarcely any thing which ought so to rouse true christians, and to strengthen them against the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, as the knowledge, that they are warranted in applying to themselves with certainty the promise of Christ, that *He prays for them*. (John xvii. 19, 20. 1 John ii. 1. Rom. viii. 33, 34. Heb. vii. 24, 25.)

#### QUESTIONS.

Do I realize the fact that the constant endeavour of evil spirits is to ensnare me into sin ?

What effect has this upon me ? Do I depend upon the intercession of Christ on my behalf ? or upon my own power to resist sin ?

Has the sifting of my past temptations shewn me to be wheat or chaff ?

How has my experience of the dangers of temptation induced me to assist others who are tempted ?

3. With what tenderness and consideration did our Lord treat his Apostles, suiting their outward circumstances to the state of their minds and feeling ! Before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit he encouraged them, by disposing the people to



## TO THE NEW TESTAMENT.

receive the word they preached, at least attention and gratitude, if not with faith. When they were sent forth to preach the Gospel to the whole world, and to meet their violent anger and opposition, He gave them that inward strength by the Holy Ghost, which afforded a support greater than any outward help. His directions upon this occasion shew us that whilst we depend upon God's providential care (and seek his blessing in the first place, with a sure confidence that he will not let us want necessary things), we are also to exercise a wise prudence in making use of such means, as will enable us to provide things honest in the sight of all men; and to protect ourselves from such outward dangers, as we may have reason to anticipate. (Matt. vi. 33. Rom. xii. 17. 2 Cor. viii. 21.)

### QUESTIONS.

Do I ever expect special assistance from God's Providence, without making use of the proper means of procuring the desired result?

Do I forget that Jesus was numbered among the transgressors, so as to be surprised at the foolish and false accusations of worldly people against christians?

### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for a spirit of contented humility, so as never to contend with others for superiority.

2. Pray to be defended from the power of the evil spirits; and commit yourself to the intercession of Christ against such dangers.

3. Pray for a spirit of prudence and wisdom in providing for the necessities and difficulties of this life.

### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) Thou Gracious Saviour, who bringest down the proud, but liftest up the humble; give me, I implore thee, true humbleness of heart, and a

really contented spirit, that, knowing that thou didst dwell amongst men as he that serveth, I may be well pleased at being made like unto thee in this world, in the hope of entering into thy glory in the world to come. (2) Make me watchful against the devices and attempts of Satan; and teach me how to flee to Thee in all his attacks. Pray for me, gracious Saviour, that however I may be sifted, my faith may not fail; and enable me to profit by the experience of every difficulty, in being the better able to strengthen my brethren. (3) I know that thou orderest all things, both in heaven and earth. Give me, I pray thee, the Spirit of wisdom, that surely trusting in thy defence, I may know how to use such means as thou shalt be pleased to bless, in supplying my real wants, and in preserving me in every danger, that all may be to the glory of thine own name, Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

. Our Father, &c.

## ONE HUNDRED &amp; EIGHTIETH PORTION.

The blessing of the cup.

PLACE.—*The Supper-chamber in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*Thursday in Passion week—The day before his death.*

YEAR 30.

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## I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of His Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. xxvi. ver. 27 to 29. St. Mark's Gospel, c. xiv. ver. 23 to 25. St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxii. ver. 20.

## III. THE MEANINGS;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

Matthew xxvi. verse

28, &c. testament *means here* covenant  
remission . . . . . forgiveness

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

THE Paschal Supper being now ended, Jesus was pleased to add the second part of that Holy ordinance, the first of which he had appointed before Judas left the table. (See portion 178, page 26.) He took a cup of wine, and after giving thanks (thus blessing it), he gave it to them, desiring them all to drink of it; which they accordingly did. He made the same declaration as to the spiritual meaning of this wine, as he had done before with respect to the bread; saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for you." To this he added the assurance

that it was his last supper, repeating the warning he had before given, that he would no more drink wine (Luke xxii. 18); adding here, "until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

A proper understanding of Christ's words in appointing the Lord's Supper, is of the greatest importance to a christian; both in enabling him to draw the true comfort and help from that sacred ordinance, which it was intended to convey; and also in guarding him from those dangerous deceits by which Satan endeavours to pervert them. The Church of Rome goes so far as to teach that, as soon as the priest has spoken the words which are said to consecrate the bread and the wine, a change takes place in them, called *Transubstantiation*; whereby "the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ, are really and truly present, under the appearances of bread and wine." Though the Romanists rest this necessarily upon the authority of their Church; yet they refer to some passages of Scripture in their support. One of these passages is what our Lord said in the synagogue at Capernaum, a year before he appointed this Sacrament. This is found in the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel; and the Romish error was exposed, when that passage was explained. (See Vol. III., page 109. Portion 89, second application.) But as there is a great tendency amongst many persons to give some superstitious reverence to the bread and the wine (although they do not go so far as the Romanists in this respect), it will be necessary to explain more particularly the real meaning of our Lord's words upon this occasion.

At the time when the appointment of the Lord's Supper took place, the great sacrifice of the Atonement had not yet been begun—the body of Jesus was yet unbroken—none of his blood had yet been shed; and his words established an ordinance for his Church, in anticipation of what was about to take place. But to understand his words in the Romanist sense, would be to suppose that his body was broken, not by the Roman soldiers, but by his own hand—that his blood was shed by his own act and deed. If this be not the case, then when Jesus said the words “this is my body, and this is my blood,” the elements of bread and wine, which he referred to, did not change in their substance; and if no change took place when our Lord spoke these words, there can be no ground for supposing such a change when they are spoken by any body else.

An important proof of the error of the Romish doctrine may be drawn from the manner in which the institution of the cup was appointed. We have four different accounts of the institution; three of the Evangelists report the original event, and our Lord himself reported it to St. Paul. (1 Cor. xi. 23—26.) Two of the Evangelists, St. Matthew and St. Mark, give the account thus. Our Lord is reported by them to have said, “this is my blood of the new testament (or covenant):” but St. Luke states it thus, “this cup is the new testament in my blood.” Both these statements really mean the same: but if any thing is supposed to depend upon the order of the words, we can refer to the mode in which St. Paul received our Lord's own report of them; and we find it to be

precisely the same as that given by St. Luke, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood."

Now it is impossible that such a notion should be drawn from these latter words, as that Jesus meant that the wine which the cup contained was actually his body, blood, soul and divinity. He appointed a solemn act, which consisted of drinking together wine out of a cup, in remembrance of the great act of his Atonement; and he affixed to that act, when it was one of remembrance on the part of the person who did it, a pledge on His part, of the covenant of salvation by faith in Him; saying, "this cup is the new covenant in my blood." As the sentence spoken by our Lord was but one; and as the statement of it reported by St. Luke is exactly confirmed in that received by St. Paul from our Lord himself, this must be taken as the form of the words; leading us to the right understanding of the reports given by the other two evangelists. And by this we know, that when St. Matthew and St. Mark write that our Lord took the cup and said, "this is my blood of the new testament," he conveyed the idea that the cup, which he then appointed to be the means of shewing forth his death until he shall come again, was to be considered as the token and pledge of the new and Gospel covenant for the fulfilment of which He was about to shed his blood. Hence the notion of any change in the substance of the wine has no warrant from the solemn words of institution.

Being a matter of so great importance, it will be useful to confirm this view of the subject, by shewing how other parts of Scripture, which speak on the point, prove the same thing.

In arguing against idolatry, the Apostle brings forward the circumstances of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He asks, "Is not the cup the communion of the blood of Christ?" "Is not the bread the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. x. 16—21.) Now this is very different from stating that the wine is the blood, and the bread is the body. It clearly states that the cup is the *communion* of (or joint-partaking in the covenant of) the blood, and the bread the *communion* of the body of Christ: and as if to draw attention to this important distinction, he adds a reference to that point, before he proceeds in the course of his argument. "For we being many, are one bread," or loaf, "and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread," or loaf; where, by the introduction of the word "for," or because, he fixes attention to the point of the preceding statement, and marks that it is the communion to which he alludes, and not the bread and the wine. He then proceeds in his argument to use an illustration taken from the sacrifices in the temple. He says, amongst the Jews, "are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of (or in communion with) the altar?" (for the Greek word is used for "partakers" which was called "communion" when it had been used in the previous verse.) He then disclaims the inference which some might have been disposed to draw from his words; that by bringing the act of sacrifice in an idol's temple in comparison with the act of sacrifice in the temple of God, he might seem to justify the notion that an idol was anything at all; and, having set that aside, he states that what the heathen sacrificed was a sacrifice not done to an

image, but to evil angels, even to devils, and not to God ; and then suggests the inference to which his argument pointed, by saying that he did not desire that they should be in communion with devils ; forcing upon them the practical result, that they cannot “ drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils ;” they cannot be “ partakers of the Lord’s table and of the table of devils.” Now in the course of this argument, the Apostle puts the receiving of the Lord’s Supper upon the same footing with the eating of the sacrifices under the Jewish dispensation, in order to convince the Corinthian christians that a communion similar in its kind takes place in eating and drinking bread and wine in the Lord’s Supper ; and he distinctly infers that a communion, also similar in its kind, takes place between the heathen and devils in their sacrifices, arguing that they cannot do both one and the other—they cannot hold communion with devils by performing the heathen sacrifices, and at the same time hold communion with Christ by partaking of the Lord’s Supper.

It seems utterly impossible to suppose that the Apostle should have made use of this argument, if the act of partaking of the Lord’s Supper had been what the Romish error supposes it to be—the “ actual receiving of Jesus Christ himself, true God and true man,—his very flesh and blood, with his soul and divinity,” which are the words in the Romish Catechism.

There is another passage in which the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is spoken of in argument ; it occurs in the eleventh chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians (18—34.) In this passage Paul first states the fact, that as the Lord



had affixed the seal of his covenant to this ordinance, as often as it was used in remembrance of him, so, as often as christians eat that bread and drink that cup, they proclaim the Lord's death in anticipation of his coming again. (The usual meaning of the word which is translated "shew forth," is to declare plainly—to proclaim—to preach—to publish. It is translated in other parts of the New Testament—to preach—to teach—and to speak.) "Wherefore,"—that is, because of this result of the administration of the Lord's Supper, that it serves to proclaim Christ's death—whoever eats and drinks these elements unworthily—in an improper manner, whether the unfitness be internal or external—shall be exposed to the charge of guilt, even of the body and blood of the Lord. He bids a man therefore examine himself, in order that he may participate worthily; seeing that the unworthy participation involves judgment, not *discerning* the Lord's body,—that is, not distinguishing, or making a difference, between ordinary and sacramental bread and wine, in the act of eating and drinking: or, in consistency with the previous part of his argument, not perceiving that he was shewing forth the Lord's death till he come. He proceeds to instance some of the effects of judgment which had already occurred:—"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many are dead." He then points out the mode of escaping such judgments, in the exercise of honest self-examination; and concludes by stating the result which he wished to produce by this whole argument—"Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man

hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come." (1 Cor. xi. 33, 34.)

But the result which he thus enforced refers to an abuse which he had stated before he recited the institution of the Sacrament. The Apostle gives this abuse as an instance of the divisions, or schisms, which he hears exist in the Church at Corinth. And then he proceeds to treat this offence in the manner we have already examined; concluding with the admonition—"When ye come together, my brethren, tarry one for another." But to see how this passage bears upon the point before us, we must imagine for a moment that the Apostle, under the power of the divine Spirit, knew that "the body and blood, and soul and divinity, of Jesus Christ were really and truly present, under the appearances of bread and wine," at every consecration of the elements in the Corinthian Church:—that both the "body and blood of Christ existed under the appearance of bread," and both the "body and blood of Christ existed under the appearance of wine,"—that there was "Christ whole and entire, true God and true man, under the taste, colour, and form of bread and wine, constituting the appearance of each." We must further conceive that he had himself instructed the Corinthian christians in this doctrine, and that they knew it as well as he. Then we must endeavour if we can, to place ourselves in the Apostle's position, when he hears that his Corinthian converts had made this awful mystery a common meal—a mere act of feasting, in which pride had cast out the poor, and given them nothing; and intemperance had added

drunkenness to thirst, so that one was hungry, and another was drunken--drunken! by an excessive indulgence in that which, under the taste, colour, and form of wine, was known, and at the time declared, to be in very deed the body, blood, soul, and divinity of the true God and true man, our Lord Jesus Christ! We turn with shuddering from such a thought.

The other passages in the Scriptures which in any way relate to the Lord's Supper, are very few; and are only sufficient to establish the fact, that the institution of our blessed Lord was joyfully and profitably acted upon, but nothing more. The passage which contains the account of the circumstances of the Church, upon the first descent of the Holy Ghost, makes a general statement of the fact, that the members of the Church "continued stedfastly in breaking of bread" (Acts ii. 42); and also that as long as they were all together at Jerusalem, they continued to frequent the Temple for public worship; while they partook of this special token of their Christian profession at home, as distinguished from their Jewish devotions; "continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house." (Acts ii. 46.) Besides this, there is another reference of a general nature; we are told (Acts xx. 7) that "upon the first day of the week, the disciples came together to break bread," and this is mentioned as the custom of the Church; while on the occasion which draws forth this statement, it is said that Paul "broke bread and eat," after performing the miracle on Eutychus (Acts xx. 11): but it may perhaps be questioned whether this last text distinctly refers

to the Lord's Supper, or to a common meal; and still stronger doubts may exist whether the statement made of Paul's breaking bread and eating on board the ship, just before it was wrecked on his voyage to Rome, is intended to refer to the Lord's Supper at all. (Acts xxvii.)

The only other special occasion alluded to in the Scriptures is that remarkable one which occurred on the evening of the Resurrection; when our Lord himself, in his risen state, being at supper with two of His disciples at Emmaus, "took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them;" upon which, though they had not before known who he was, yet immediately "their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight." Upon returning to Jerusalem, they reported to the other disciples what had happened, "and how he was known of them in breaking of bread." (Luke xxiv. 30, 31, 35.)

It will be perceived at once, that none of these passages tend in any way to contribute any ground for the doctrine of transubstantiation; and that in fact they prove nothing, except the certainty of the universal practice of the Church, in thus shewing forth the Lord's death according to his Sacramental appointment.

The Scripture affords not the slightest warrant for attributing virtue of any kind to the bread and wine employed in the administration of the Sacrament, disconnected from the person who receives them, and his spiritual state at the time of receiving. At no period, either before or after consecration, can the bread and wine, as such, justly be the object of other feelings than those which are excited by a natural sense of separate-

ness as employed for a holy purpose, which should preserve them from irreverent use; just as it is natural to feel a respect for the building set apart for the worship of God, which makes its application to ordinary and common uses shocking to the notions of a well-ordered mind.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures, See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. The many devices by which Satan has endeavoured to turn the doctrine of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper into evil, is one proof that much benefit will result to those who partake of this blessed ordinance rightly; and the experience of humble-minded and sincere christians confirms this truth. The death of our Lord Jesus Christ stands, as it were, in the centre of the whole circle of a christian's faith; and one who is properly instructed as to what he should believe, remembers it all when he remembers that. When we call this great thing to mind, we look upon that which increases our love for Christ, and our hatred for sin; and he is in the happiest and the safest condition who is most continually increasing in these. It was therefore most merciful in Jesus to appoint a particular way suited to our habits and feelings, for calling to mind this great key to the remembrance of every thing else; and it was to be expected that Satan would endeavour as much as possible to disturb so useful and blessed an arrangement.

The explanation which has been given of the principal error by which the good is turned into evil in the Church of Rome, may be sufficient to

guard against the wicked blasphemy by which men are taught to regard the bread and the wine, as being themselves the very God. But while attempting to avoid this grievous error, some have fallen into an opposite extreme, and disregarded the solemn pledge which our Lord has given in connection, not with the bread and wine, as such, but with the receiving of them in remembrance of him. To persons who thus receive them, the bread and wine are not the objects of superstitious worship when they see them, but they are the means of spiritual comfort and power when they receive them ; and though Satan may fail in rendering a christian superstitious, he succeeds in his devices if he induces him to neglect such a means of grace, so appointed by Christ himself.

There can be no sufficient excuse for a christian, who neglects to frequent the Lord's table. It is a command, and therefore an invitation, of the Lord Jesus himself. If he prefer the invitations which other things offer him, by tempting him with the inducements either of business or pleasure, to refuse this invitation, it is a plain proof that those other things stand before Christ in his mind and heart ; and therefore he cannot be one of those who would give up all to follow Christ.

The most usual reason, which induces so many professing christians to be altogether negligent of the Lord's command to do this, in remembrance of him is, that they do not consider themselves "good enough," as it is commonly expressed. When this excuse is examined, it will always be found to mean that the persons who make it, have a sense of sin, without having a hearty desire to give it up. When it is considered that there can

be no means of escaping the punishment due to sin, except by taking advantage of the death of Christ; and no means of resisting the power of sin effectually, except by remembering what it caused Christ to suffer; it does indeed seem a strange inconsistency that any, who profess to be christians, should refuse to take the way of shewing forth the Lord's death till he come; which was divinely and mercifully appointed by the Lord himself.

## QUESTIONS.

With what feelings do I regard the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

Have I a superstitious awe respecting the bread and wine themselves?

Or have I a spiritual sense of the Lord's mercy in connexion with my receiving them?

Am I a communicant? If not, why not?

Have I taken proper care to inform myself concerning the objections which hinder me?

Being a communicant, am I constant in my attendance at the Lord's Table whenever it is prepared for me?

If not, why not?

Is the remembrance of the Lord's death an habitual thought of my mind?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for simplicity of faith, in shewing forth the Lord's death in the way he appointed at His Supper.

2. Pray to be preserved from all superstition in the use of the bread and wine; and to discern the Lord's body only as He has commanded.

3. Acknowledge your unworthiness of the mercy promised at the Lord's table; and pray that you may profit by God's mercy, so as to be one with Christ, in receiving His gracious pledge.

## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Almighty God, I render to thee most humble and hearty thanks, for that thou hast given thine only Son, Jesus Christ, not only to die

for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Give me grace, I beseech thee, so faithfully to receive the blessing of his holy mystery, that I may be able, with the simplicity of a child, to do as He has commanded, in shewing forth his precious death therein. (2) Preserve me from all abuse of that holy Sacrament; and keep me especially from all superstition concerning those things which Jesus has appointed as the tokens of his body broken, and his blood shed, so that I may discern his body in the use of the bread and the wine, just so far as He purposed that His people should discern it. (3) I do not presume to come to thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in my own righteousness: but in thy manifold and great mercies. I am not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy. Grant me therefore, gracious Lord, in receiving the holy Sacrament, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son, and to drink his blood, that my sinful body may be made clean by his body, and my soul washed through His most precious blood; and that I may evermore dwell in him, and he in me. Amen.

Our Father, &c.



## ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIRST PORTION.

The Discourse of consolation.—*Discourse*, No. 30.

PLACE.—*The Supper-chamber in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*Thursday in Passion Week—the day before his death.*  
*Year 30.*

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### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. John's Gospel, chapter xiv.

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

verse

2. mansions *means here* places to live in

8. it sufficeth us... it will be enough for us

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

JESUS had now completed the appointment of that affecting ordinance, the Lord's Supper ; which thus became the Sacrament, or solemn bond, by which his people in all ages publicly profess themselves his disciples, and pledge themselves to walk before the world as those who belong to Christ : and he took this occasion of addressing to his Apostles a discourse full of the most tender affection ; in which he gave them the most comforting

assurances of his own future care for them, and informed them concerning some of the most important doctrines.

He began his discourse by telling them that they were not to give way to that trouble of heart, which they would feel at his going away from them : they knew that Jehovah was the true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as he had condescended to call himself (Exod. iii. 15); let them now consider what he had before told them, that he and the Father are one (John x. 30); and put their trust in him, even as they did in Jehovah. He told them that in the dwelling-place of the Most High God, his Father (Psa. xc. 1, 9), there was room enough to receive many people. Had this not been the case, he would have told them so; he was now about to leave this world, and go to his Father, in order to prepare the way for their entering into that dwelling-place of God; and in leaving them for this purpose, he would not let his great work fail of producing its object: but he would himself return, in order to take his disciples to the place he now went to prepare for them, that they might always be with him, wherever he was. (1 Thess. iv. 16—18.)

He had before, upon three several occasions, prepared them for his death, and his resurrection, which was to follow (Matt. xvi. 21, 27; xx. 18, 19. Mark ix. 31. John xii. 2, 3); and now he said, they knew where he was going to, and also the mode of getting there. Upon this, Thomas ventured to interrupt him, and to say that they did not know where he was going to, much less therefore could they tell how to get there. To

this Jesus replied, by stating that great truth, that the only means by which a sinner can come to God, is through Christ, and therefore he is the way to heaven—that Christ has brought the knowledge of the true God to man, by which all false religion is put aside ; and therefore he is the truth—that in Christ is the source of life, and that the words he speaks, they are spirit, and they are life (John i. 4 ; vi. 63 ; xi. 25, 26) ; and therefore he is the life. It is impossible for any man to come to God the Father, except by means of Jesus. If the Apostles had received the right knowledge of Jesus, which he had many times endeavoured to convey to them, they would also have had a right knowledge of God the Father ; and from what he was then saying, they might receive that right knowledge, and might even be said to have seen God. Upon this Philip answered, that if he would shew them God the Father, that would be quite enough to satisfy them. Our Lord in reply, asked how it was that he could have been so long in intercourse with the disciples, and yet that Philip had known so little who he really was. Whoever had seen Jesus, had seen the Father ; since Jesus was God “ manifest in the flesh ” (1 Tim. iii. 16)—was the Son of God, and “ the express image of his person ” (Heb. i. 3)—was the Word made flesh, and dwelling among men, so that they could behold “ his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John i. 1—5, 14.) This being the case, how could Philip yet ask to be shown the Father, in order to be satisfied ? did he not believe that Jesus was in God the Father, and God the Father in him ? (Matt. xvi. 15—17.

John x. 30.) The words that He was speaking to them were not the expressions of the mere man, whom they saw with their eyes; but by his union with God the Father, it was the Almighty himself who performed these miracles, by which he proved the truth and certainty of his words. He bid them believe his declarations, that he and the Father were thus wonderfully joined in one: but if they doubted his words, let them consider the miraculous works which he had done, in testimony of the truth of what he had declared. (John x. 37, 38.)

Jesus then assured his disciples, that the miraculous works which he had himself performed in testimony of the truth of his Gospel, should afterwards be performed, for the same purpose, by those who believe on him; and that there were even greater things which should be done by believers, the power to do which would be given to them in consequence of his going to the Father. Accordingly we find in fact, that the Apostles and others performed many miracles similar to those which our Lord had done (Matt. xvi. 17, 18. Acts iii. 1—9; v. 16; viii. 7; ix. 32—42; xiv. 8—10); and also that, after the ascension of the Lord Jesus, much greater and more wonderful things than any outward effects, were produced by the conversion of multitudes of persons through the preaching of the Gospel, after the descent of the Holy Ghost. (John xvi. 7—11. Acts ii. 1—42; v. 14; viii. 5—7, 25—40; x. 34—48; xi. 19—21.)

Our Lord proceeded to state one of the blessed results that would result from his going to the

Father—there to receive gifts for men. (Eph.iv.8.) Whatever his disciples should require on his behalf, while pleading in their prayer that it had been purchased for them by the atonement of Jesus (which is included in the meaning of asking in his name), that will Jesus himself do for them. He said that he will do this, in order that the glory of the Father may be seen, and known to be, in the Son. If a disciple comes to God to pray for any thing in the name of Jesus, as sent by him ; Jesus himself, being at the right hand of the Father (Mark xvi. 19), will grant the prayer.

Having given so many wonderful proofs of his love for his disciples, Jesus spoke of the love with which he required them to regard him. The testimony that this love is really in their hearts he expects to be, that they should do what he desires them : and he promised that, in order to excite this love in them, together with the power so to prove it, as well as to comfort them during the absence from this world of Him whom they thus loved, he would speak to God the Father on their behalf ; and He would give to them the Holy Ghost, whom he calls here the Paraclete. The word “ Comforter ” in the English does not give the full meaning ; the Greek word expresses much more than one who gives comfort, it includes also the meaning of one who admonishes, and intercedes, and pleads on our behalf. Jesus himself is called the Paraclete with the Father (in 1 John ii. 1, where the word is translated Advocate), as the Holy Ghost is called the Paraclete with men. Therefore our Lord said that the Holy Ghost would be given as “ another Comforter ; ” because he himself was the one Comforter,

who was about to leave them. The other Comforter would remain with his disciples during all the generations of the period till the end of the world. He is the Spirit of truth, and as being a Spirit and communicating the truth, those persons who are of the world cannot receive him; because he is not to be perceived with the outward senses, by which alone they judge, nor can he be brought within the power of their natural understanding, beyond which they will not go. (1 Cor. i. 18—31.) But Christ's true disciples do know the Spirit of truth, being brought to that knowledge by the Holy Ghost himself; who at the time Jesus was speaking to his disciples, was with them, having already proved his power over their minds, by teaching them to acknowledge the truth, that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of the living God. (Matt. xvi. 16, 17.) The same Spirit would, however, exercise greater influence over them, and become more intimately connected with his disciples afterwards; for he would actually come into them, and make their bodies the temples of the Holy Ghost. (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. i. 13, 14; iv. 30.) This he did shortly after, on the day of Pentecost. (Acts ii. 4.) Jesus said that he would not leave them in the world desolate, in the condition of orphans (which is the meaning of the word translated "comfortless,") without any one to stand in the place of a parent to guide and help them. By his union in the Godhead with the Father and the Spirit, the promised coming of the Holy Ghost would be in fact himself coming to them spiritually to comfort them. (Eph. iii. 17. Col. i. 27.) In a short time, persons who had no spiritual

power or light would lose sight of him upon his leaving the earth to go to heaven : but his disciples would not lose sight of him, for knowing that he was gone to the right hand of the Father, they would be able to see him by faith ; the world would consider him dead, but he would be alive in heaven ; and in consequence of his living and possessing the Holy Spirit in fulness, his disciples, who receive of that Spirit, would possess the principle of everlasting life. (John iv. 14 ; vi. 27 ; xi. 25, 26.)

During the period when the Holy Spirit should thus be sent by him to give life to his disciples, their minds would be enlightened to know the mystery of his divinity—that Christ exists in God the Father ; and also of his union with the true Church, by which his disciples have life in Him, and he dwells in them : and the effect of this life would be love ; and the proof of love, obedience. They who, receiving Christ's commands through the Gospel, are doers of the word, not hearers only (James i. 22)—such are the persons who really love him ; and all who do this shall certainly be objects of the love of the Father, and of the Son ; who will manifest himself to every such person. Upon our Lord's saying this, he was asked by Jude the brother of James (Luke vii. 16. Jude 1),—a different person from Judas Iscariot, how it could possibly be that He would shew himself to the disciples, and yet in such a way that the people of the world, who are not his disciples, should not be able to see him ? To this Jesus replied, that a person's love to Christ would be known by its effects, in making that person obedient to the word of Christ ; and would, at the same time,

be the testimony of the love of God the Father towards him; and God, even the Father, and the Son, by the Spirit, will come into him, and abide in his heart. Thus then would Christ "manifest" himself to the hearts of those who love Him. Whereas they who love him not, and do not obey his word, cannot receive any such blessing: for the commands he gave to his disciples are not the words of a mere man, but of God himself who had sent him into the world. (1 John iii. 6, 10, 24; iv. 10, 13, 16, 19; v. 2, 3, 10.)

Our Lord took advantage of the short time that yet remained for him to be with the Apostles, to tell them of these things: but before long the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, would be sent to them by the Father on his behalf; and when he had come, he would instruct them further in all things that it was necessary for them to know (1 John ii. 27), and would recall to their minds all the instructions which He himself had given them. Upon leaving them, and giving them that great gift of the Holy Ghost, he left with them the blessing of peace. The peace which he gave them was not the false peace of the world; but the peace of God in Christ; which, though it is above man's understanding, will keep the heart and mind steadfast. (Phil. iv. 7. Isaiah xxvi. 3; xlviii. 22.) He repeated the charge with which he had begun his discourse, that they should not allow their hearts to be troubled, nor shrink from his service, through fear of the distresses they were to undergo. They had heard him say that he was going to leave them, in order to return to them again (verses 2, 3): their love to him were what it ought to be, they



would rather be glad of this, since he assured them that he was going to God the Father in heaven; and that therefore all his earthly sufferings would be finished. He would again enjoy that greater glory which he had left, when he made himself of no reputation, taking upon him the form of a servant, and being made in the likeness of men; so as to become inferior to the Father as touching his manhood. In that very manhood he was about to go to the Father, who is greater than the man Christ Jesus.

The reason why our Lord told them beforehand of his going, was in order that the remembrance of it should confirm their faith in him, when they saw the very things come to pass which he had foretold. He informed them of this now, rather than later, because the hour was fast approaching when Satan (the ruler of this fallen world) would be permitted to have power to persecute him. (Luke xxii. 53. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Eph. vi. 11, 12.) But however violent might be the assaults of that evil spirit by outward means, there was nothing within that blessed Saviour belonging to the prince of this world—not even the taint of original sin, by which the wicked one might gain an entrance within him. During this struggle with Satan, which was coming on, he would not be able to converse with them much. But, as long as he was able, he would, by all that he said and did, shew the world his love for the Father, and his obedience to that which He had sent him to perform.

At this point of his discourse, Jesus bid his disciples arise from the table, and prepare to leave

the chamber in which they had been celebrating the Paschal Supper.

V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture, See No. II.

VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. Perhaps the tender compassion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his real sympathy with man, appear more plainly in this discourse than in any other of the lesser circumstances of his life upon earth. He was about to leave those with whom he had had so much affectionate intercourse for the last three years; he well knew all the trials which would come upon them after his departure, as well as the great weakness of their natural condition; and his own heart being much affected with this, he gave them now a tender farewell, before the time of his great struggle with the evil enemy should make it impossible for him to talk much with them. The whole of the discourse therefore should excite in our minds a lively sense of the tenderness and the completeness of Christ's feelings for his people. And this is the more affecting, as well as the more important to ourselves, because the first object of his discourse was, to assure his disciples of his continuing care for them during his absence with the Father in heaven. He went to prepare a place for them with himself; and in the meanwhile he does not leave them comfortless, but comes to them by his Spirit; and communicates to them the expectations of those heavenly hopes, of which he has prepared the reality, and also the beginning of that spiritual life in which alone they can be capable of enjoying the glory he has obtained for

them. This discourse therefore is not only a farewell token of Christ's tenderness to his apostles, but it is also his own account of the way in which he will exercise that tenderness towards his own disciples in every generation, until he shall come again to receive them unto himself.

## QUESTIONS.

Am I duly impressed with the thought of the tenderness of feeling with which the Lord Jesus Christ cares for me?

Am I in the habit of realizing his presence with me by the Holy Spirit? Do I receive comfort from this truth?

2. While this discourse of our Lord's conveys such affecting proof of his true manhood, and of his care for his brethren upon earth, it contains also some of the very strongest statements of his real divinity and oneness with God the Father. He tells Thomas, that to know him, is to know the Father; and assures Philip, that to have seen him, is to have seen the Father: he declares that when he did a miracle, it was actually the Father who did it; and he promises that when prayer is made to the Father, he (Christ) will grant what is asked, in order that the Father may be glorified through him. It is impossible to use stronger words than these, to convey to the mind of man that mystery which, though it is above the power of his understanding, is not beyond the reach of his faith. While we think with wonder on the union between God and man in Christ, we may at the same time rest in confidence that, however wonderful, it is certainly true; and may at the same time rejoice, to find the proper object for our worship, in the person who is our brother and our Saviour.

## QUESTIONS.

Do I submit my mind heartily, and entirely, to the blessed truth of the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ ?

Have I a lively sense of gratitude for the wonderful mercy that being my God, he is also my Saviour ?

3. In this discourse, our Lord gave that great promise, of sending the Paraclete, or Comforter, that blessed Spirit who has remained amongst men upon earth ever since, dwelling in those who are the true people of God. Here he has continually exercised his office, of teaching all necessary things to the disciples of Christ; and of conveying to their heart an effectual remembrance of Christ's word, once spoken by him, and since written for our learning. The doctrine of this spiritual instruction is resisted by the world. Worldly-minded persons will not receive the Holy Spirit, because they require the testimony of their senses, or of their understanding, before they will acknowledge any thing: but the Holy Spirit can be perceived only by the exercise of faith, which he himself calls forth, when he enters into the heart of a christian. To do this is now his common and ordinary way of bringing souls to Christ; though before the time that he was sent to abide with men in the name of Jesus Christ, it was by an uncommon and extraordinary gift that the servants of God, specially elected, were added to the spiritual Church by faith in the Lamb of God. The Holy Ghost was indeed *with* men, working God's will in various ways; but it is under the dispensation of the gospel that he is promised to be *in* them, conforming those in whom he dwells to the image of Christ Jesus. (Rom. viii.

9—17, 26—29.) It is thus that he manifests himself to the people of God, in a way in which he cannot be perceived by the people of the world. And the difficulty which Saint Jude had in understanding this point, drew forth from our Lord that simple, yet wonderful statement; whereby an humble christian may know surely, that when he finds the love of God shed abroad in his heart, producing in him sincere and diligent endeavours to live according to the gospel, he may take it as a certain mark that the Holy Ghost is within him, a token of the love of the Father, who with His blessed Son, has condescended to “make his abode with him.” Thus may a christian be able to know, that Jesus Christ is one with the Father; whilst at the same time all true christians are in Jesus, and Jesus in them.

## QUESTIONS.

Have I the testimony of the abiding of the Holy Ghost within me?

Are the affections of my heart really drawn out towards God and heavenly things?

Is this proved by my habitual endeavour to act according to the spirit of the Gospel?

Do I endeavour to realize the great and wonderful blessing of having the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to love me, and abide with me?

Does this produce in me a solemn sense of holy fear, lest by carelessness and sin I should lose so great a blessing?

4. After such promises and declarations of Christ, as we have been already considering in this portion, it can be no matter of wonder that true Christians are told that they may expect to enjoy a peace very different from, and very far

superior to, that which the world's advantages can produce (Psa. iv. 7) ; such a peace as no troubles or distresses in the world can deprive us of, because it is the special gift of Him who is above all the powers of the world. There is no blessing so great, as a peaceful quietness through all the variety of trials to which human life is subject. It signifies little what may happen to disturb and trouble us, so long as the heart possesses such a peace as that which is the gift of Christ. A peace which arises out of a conviction, that our sins are forgiven, and will not bring us into condemnation—that God is present with us to subdue our evil nature, and to prevent us from falling under the temptations that surround us—and that the Lord is coming again to take us to himself, that we may be for ever with him : with such convictions of faith, a Christian need never shrink from any trials to which he may be exposed, nor be troubled at any afflictions which the providence of God may permit to come upon him.

## QUESTIONS.

Do I possess a quietness of mind, which makes me pass through life comfortably and in peace ?

Is it Christ's peace ? or merely a worldly-minded peace ?

Is it a peace, in spite of some troubles for conscience sake ?

Is it a peace connected with an unshrinking boldness in meeting any unpleasant consequences which may spring from a straight-forward religious line of conduct ?

Is it connected with a deep sense of sinfulness in myself, combined with a faith in the power of Christ's atonement ?

Is it drawn from the expectations of that time, when the wicked will cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest ?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for a comforting sense of the manhood and sympathy of the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Pray for a deep conviction of the true divinity of the Saviour, God and man.
3. Pray for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and for an abundant testimony of his presence by your inward affections and outward conduct.
4. Pray for the peace of Christ which passeth all understanding ; and for a clear proof of it, as contrasted with a satisfied worldliness.

## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) Almighty God, who hast given us thine only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born of a pure virgin, without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin ; comfort me, I beseech thee, with an assured conviction that he, as a brother in my flesh, feels for my infirmities ; and that, having ascended up into heaven to prepare a place for his disciples, he there ever liveth to make intercession for me. (2) Make me to feel the truth of that which I cannot reach with my mind, and convince me, by faith, of that which I cannot understand ; that He, that same Saviour, is indeed very God ; who, having humbled himself to the nature of man, sitteth at thy right hand, God and man—one Christ. Give me grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the divine majesty to worship the Unity ; and keep me, I beseech thee, steadfast in this faith. (3) Bestow upon me, I implore thee, that precious promised gift which I ask in the name of Jesus thy Son my Saviour : for his sake

give me that other Comforter—the Holy Ghost—that he may dwell in me, and bring forth abundant fruit of holy affections and godly works: so that I myself may surely know that my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that my light may so shine before men that they may see my good works, and glorify thee O Father in heaven.

(4) And do thou, Lord Jesus, bestow upon me that peace, which is not given as the world gives peace. Let me not be deceived by any quiet satisfaction which my natural heart may feel, even while in a sinful course; but do thou, O Father, let that peace which passeth all understanding keep my heart and mind through Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.



## ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SECOND PORTION.

The discourse of consolation continued.—*Discourse, No. 30.*

PLACE.—*The Supper-chamber in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*The Evening of Thursday in Passion Week—the day before his death.—Year 30.*

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### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. John's Gospel, chapter xv.

### III. THE MEANINGS :

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

JOHN xv. verse

- |               |                   |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. husbandman | <i>means here</i> | owner of the vine |
| 2. purgeth    | .....             | prunes            |
| 16. ordained  | .....             | appointed         |

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

When our Lord and his disciples had risen from the supper-table, before they left the chamber to go forth according to his desire, he went on with his discourse to them.

He compared himself to a grape-vine; and he said he was the true one belonging to God the Father, and cultivated by Him. (Isaiah v. 1—7.) Jesus is like the stem of the vine growing out of the earth, and from which all the branches shoot forth. As the owner of a vine would cut off every branch, though coming from the stem, that did not bear any grapes upon it; so does God refuse and put away all persons, who, professing themselves to be christians, yet do not shew in their conduct

any of those fruits of the Spirit of Christ, which would be the proper consequences of a real spiritual connection with him. (Gal. v. 22—25. Eph. v. 9.) And in the same way that when the owner found that a branch was producing grapes, he would prune it, in order that it should not grow to wood, and that none of the sap fit to make fruit should be wasted in unnecessary shoots and tendrils ; so does God put every true christian to trials of some kind or another ; in order that they may produce more abundantly the fruit of holiness. (Heb. xii. 4—11. 1 Pet. iv. 12—16. 2 Cor. iv. 15—18. Matt. v. 16.)

Jesus told the eleven disciples to whom he was speaking, that their souls had been made like fruit-bearing branches, by means of the instructions he had already given them (Matt. x. 7, 16—18) ; and he bid them take care to continue in union with him, by his Spirit dwelling in them. It would be impossible for a vine-branch to bring forth grapes, if it did not continue to grow out of the stem. So also it is impossible that a christian can do any work acceptable to God, and useful to His glory, without remaining in spiritual union with Christ ; who is to his people, just what the stem is to the branches of a tree. The sap rising through the stem, spreads into the branches, and causes them to produce fruit. A christian who continues in union with Christ, has the Spirit of Christ within him, there working both to will and to do of his good pleasure (Phil. ii. 13) ; and producing a course of conduct, encreasingly holy : but apart from Christ, a christian has no power of holiness, and can do nothing really suitable to his christian character. When any branches are cut

off from the stem of a tree, the sap no more rises into them, therefore they wither; and being of no use for bearing, they are laid aside for fire-wood, and burned. In the same manner, if a professing christian does not continue in union with Christ, he becomes incapable of spiritual life, and is laid aside for the consuming fire of the last day.

One blessed effect of this continued union with Christ, (so that his rules and instructions have an abiding influence upon our secret motives) is, that it gives us the power of acceptable prayer. Our wills and desires being made suitable to Christ's, we may ask of God to give us what we desire, and he will do so. It tends to God's glory to answer such prayers: for, being joined to Christ, as a branch to a stem, and receiving our sap from him, our desires are to bring forth the fruit of such works as his; and our prayers would be according to our desires. And it is by producing an abundant crop of such fruits of the Spirit, that God is glorified in us. This is the way we shew ourselves to be indeed disciples of Christ.

God the Father's love for the Lord Jesus Christ is taken by that Saviour as the example and measure of his own love to his disciples: and he told them this, that they might be the more earnest in laying fast hold of that love, and not departing from it. The way to do so is to obey his commands, just as Jesus perfectly fulfilled all the commands of his Father, and remained unchangeable in his love. Jesus said these blessed things to them, in order that the joy which He alone can give, might not only be their portion for a little moment, but that they might continue to enjoy it; and that their

enjoyment of such a blessing might not be imperfect, but complete.

He had bid them keep his commandments, in order to abide in his love; and now he would give them one special commandment,—that they should love one another after the example, and according to the measure, of his own love to them. It was impossible that any one could give a greater proof of real love for his friends, than that which he was just about to give, by consenting to die for them. His disciples were in this respect, his friends; such of them at least, as follow his directions, and obey his commands. From that time forward he would not call them servants: for there is this difference between a servant and a friend,—that a master does not tell his servant of his acts and intentions, whilst to his friend he does speak of them: and so Jesus called his disciples his friends, because he had made them acquainted with all that he had heard from his father. They were not to suppose that this friendship and connection between them arose from their having desired it, and chosen him for their friend; it was, on the contrary, Jesus who had selected them, and appointed them to be the persons who should carry his name amongst men, and shew forth that course of holy conduct, which is the fruit of their union with him;—a fruit which should continue to them, in order that they might have that power of acceptable prayer which he had just spoken of; so that God the Father would grant to them whatever they asked in the name of Jesus Christ his Son.

Jesus gave them these commandments, in order that they might love one another. The effect would be very different amongst people who are

not his disciples, whom he called the world. If his true disciples were hated by such persons, they might remember that the world had first hated himself; and they must take such hatred as one proof to them that they do not belong to the world: for if they were the same sort of people as the world, then worldly people would love them: but the very fact that the disciples had become different from the world, having been selected by Jesus out of the great mass of worldly people, would be one reason of their being hated. Our Lord bid them recollect what he had already told them upon this very point (Luke vi. 40. Matt. x. 24. John xiii. 16); a servant is not greater than his master, and therefore must not expect to be treated better than him. The same sort of people who treated him ill, will treat them ill also; while, on the other hand, the same sort of people that have done as he bid them, will also do as his disciples bid them.

The reason why the world would treat them in this way, was because, as his disciples, they would maintain the glory of his name, and the truth of his doctrine; and such people's perverse opposition would arise from their ignorance of the true God. If Christ had not come into the world, and spoken to them such words, as ought to have explained to them anything they might before have mistaken in the prophetic account of the Messiah, their neglecting him under such mistakes would not have been so sinful; but the fact of his having taught them as he did, took away every excuse for their sin. It drew out also the proof of their hatred to God: for whoever hates Christ, in fact shows that they hate God the Father. If

Christ had not done such merciful, as well as powerful, works, as had never been done by any man, then the world might have pleaded ignorance of his true character : but the good works he had done ought to be enough to convince them that he was a good man, and deserved credit ; yet with this testimony before their eyes, the world hated him ; and in so doing, they shewed that they hated God the Father. This had been prophesied before in the Old Testament: the word, "they hated me without a cause" was fulfilled in him. (Ps. xxxv. 19 ; lxix. 4.)

Very different would be the effect produced by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. He is the Spirit of truth, and comes forth from God the Father ; and Jesus promised that he would send him to his disciples from the Father. When he enters into the heart, he brings at once a convincing testimony of the truth of Jesus. The disciples also to whom he was speaking, would act as his witnesses amongst men ; which was the reason why they had been chosen to accompany him from the beginning of his ministry.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture. See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

The whole of this discourse of consolation may be said to be our Lord's own practical application of his ministry to his disciples. In this portion of it he brings forward several essential points of practice, by comparing himself to the stem of the grape-vine, and his disciples to the branches.

1. The first of these practical points is the absolute necessity of being united with Christ, by the indwelling of his Spirit within us, in order to

be capable of fulfilling the great object of the Gospel—the glorifying of God, by such a course of conduct amongst men as is suitable to His character. All attempts made by men to attain unto holiness, by any other means than that of union with Christ, and the working of His Holy Spirit within them, must fail of success in the end; nay, they can only seem to succeed for a time, from the false notions of what is good and acceptable to God, which the world set up as the standard of right. Whatever men may judge concerning the character of any one, and however respectable he may be in his station, no one is a true christian, or will obtain the final salvation in glory—which is a christian's hope—but those who are joined to Christ, by His Spirit dwelling in them, so that their affections and motives of conduct grow out of him, as a branch grows out of the stem of a vine.

## QUESTIONS.

Am I joined to Christ by his spirit? What proof have I of it?  
What hope have I, if I have no proof that such is the case?

2. The next practical point to be gathered from this portion of our Lord's discourse, is the absolute necessity for such a course of conduct in a christian, as is suitable to the character of the Holy Spirit, who thus joins them to Christ. We are told elsewhere that the fruit of this Spirit is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (or faithfulness), meekness, temperance" (Gal. v. 22, 23): and in many other parts the Scriptures plainly tell us what must be seen in our lives, when the Holy Spirit really dwells in our hearts. This is the fruit which must be brought forth by every christian, in a greater or less degree; or else the same thing will happen to the

soul which would certainly take place with respect to the fruitless branch:—as the gardener would cut it off, and throw it on one side, and by and bye would pick up all such branches to use them for fire-wood; so the professing christian who is not fruitful in such good works as adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour, will be cut off, as useless to the glory of God,—will be cast aside by the great husbandman, and left for that condemnation, which is so often called the fire that is not quenched. (Mark ix. 43—48.) Our own endeavours to reach the worldly standard of a good character, or to save ourselves by paying as it were the price of certain supposed good actions for a place in heaven, are mistaken by many for that christian walk and conversation, which is the real fruit of the Spirit. This is not the cause of our salvation, but the effect of it; it is therefore unmixed with any notion of self-righteousness, because it is clearly traced to the grace of God towards us, by virtue of our union with Christ Jesus. Such consistent conduct proves to ourselves, what is the source from whence we draw our comfort, and the ground on which we rest our hopes; while to others it glorifies God, by shewing His power in us. Herein, therefore, is God the Father glorified, that we bear much fruit; and so it is that we are the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## QUESTIONS.

What is the general course of my conduct?

What do I know to be its secret motives? What do others see to be its outward character?

How far is it consistent with my christian profession?

Is it the fruit of the Holy Spirit, by which God is glorified through me?



3. But whilst striving with earnestness and sincerity to bring forth this fruit in our lives, we constantly find how much we are hindered by the sinful corruptions of our own heart, and by the dangerous snares of the world. Hence our fruit is but little, compared to what it ought to be; and that little very imperfect. Here we may see the benefit of a third point of practical application in our Lord's discourse; namely, the pruning of the fruit-bearing branch, that it may bring forth more fruit. This explains to us one of the principal causes for those trials and chastisements to which the children of God are subject in this life; and while it explains the cause of them, it turns their painful effects into a blessing. (James i. 2—4. 1 Pet. iv. 12-19.) The knowledge of this cause of our afflictions gives a powerful impulse to diligence in striving to bring forth more fruit; and let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in Heaven. (Matt. v. 16.)

## QUESTIONS.

What are my afflictions? Have they led me to consider wherefore God contendeth with me?

What effect have they produced in my outward conduct as a christian?

How far have they been made the means of purifying the affections of my heart?

4. A fourth point of practical application in this discourse is the necessity of constantly abiding in that unvarying union with Christ, which is the only means of salvation, and the only source of holy living. This is very strongly pressed by our Lord. The same Greek word (translated in the English words "abide," "continue," and "remain,") is repeated no fewer than eleven times

between the 4th and the 11th verses of this chapter ; and it is applied in every case to the unvarying continuance of that union between Christ in heaven, and his true disciples on earth ; which is the subject of the comparison of the vine and its branches. The repetition of the same word may be always taken as a sign, that particular attention is called to the thought which the word conveys. In this case, we are reminded that the spiritual state which alone can produce holy living in this world, and happiness in the world to come, entirely depends upon our union with Christ ; and that to cease to be in union with him, is to cease to have holiness now, or hope for eternity. It must therefore be very plain that, when once joined to Christ by the Holy Spirit, our salvation requires that we should continue to be so joined with him. This view of the subject shews what a dangerous thing it is to grieve the Holy Spirit, by any wilful or permitted sin ; since it is by his continuing to dwell in us, and so to unite us to Christ, that we are “ sealed unto the day of redemption.” (Eph. iv. 30.)

## QUESTION.

What care do I take to maintain my spiritual union with Christ ?

What proof have I, that my union with him is abiding ?

Have I any feeling of alarm, lest I should not continue united to him ? and does this make me watchful against every thing that would grieve the Holy Spirit ?

5. Another point of very great importance in the practical application of our Lord's discourse is, that he has been here pleased to connect the certain answers to our prayers, with our continuing united to him. (verses 7 and 16.) It is by virtue of the intercession of Christ our Brother,

as our Advocate and Mediator with the Father, that we are able to obtain both the grace of pardon for our sins, and the answers to our petitions. (1 John ii. 1.) To be disconnected from Christ, would necessarily prevent the communication of these mercies to us. To be joined to him by the Spirit, secures us these blessings for his sake. Our union with Christ has the effect of regulating our wills and desires ; and therefore of making us love to ask of God those things which he loves to give us. Hence we can understand how it is that, if we abide in Christ, we may ask what we will, and God will grant our petitions. The privilege and power thus graciously connected with our spiritual union with Christ, should act upon our hearts as an additional motive for diligence in abiding in that union ; while it should also lead us to a faithful confidence in prayer while we so continue.

## QUESTIONS.

What effect upon me have the promises to prayer, in making me careful to establish a good ground of hope that I am abiding in Christ ?

With what degree of confidence can I expect, that my prayers will be heard under this promise of our Lord ?

6. A sixth application in this blessed discourse will lead us to consider that wonderful distinction of love, which is conferred upon the people who abide in Christ ; and which is marked by their love one for another. Nothing can be more striking than the way in which our Lord states this. He points out the love of God the Father for himself as the model and rule by which he loves his people ; and he sets this before them, in order to urge them to constant continuance in spiritual union with himself. He points out the mode by which they may realize the certainty of

this union, by telling us that ready obedience to his commands, being the mark of affection in them, is at the same time the token of his unchangeable affection for them. He states that this affectionate obedience is the principle by which the love between himself and God the Father is regulated; and then he shews that as that divine interchange of love is the source from which the great stream of affection flows out from the heart of Christ for his people, so it must produce a stream of similar affection in his people towards each other. He engages them to manifest this according to the same rule of loving obedience, by making it his special command that his disciples should love one another; aiming at nothing less than that measure of love which he has borne to them. Here therefore he puts before us the highest and the holiest examples, by which to regulate our conduct; affording us the strongest inducements, both to affectionate obedience to his commands, and to the exercise of a large love towards our fellow christians.

## QUESTIONS.

What effect does the knowledge of God's love in Christ towards his people produce upon me?

Does it lessen the difficulty of obedience to Christ's commands?

Does it give me a ready impulse of affection towards my fellow christians?

7. There is yet another application which we must not pass by, and which should increase our sense of the blessing which belongs to Christ's true people, by shewing us the contrast between them, and those persons whom the Lord calls the world. These are distinguished by the painful characteristic, that they love the things and the people of this present life, more than they love

Christ and his disciples : for this is properly the meaning of the manner in which the word hate is used in this portion. (See Luke xiv. 26. Vol. iv. page 271. Matt. vi. 24. Vol. i. page 310.) They like that which keeps them from God ; and they do not like that which would take from them the enjoyments they value above every thing else. Persons of this class who lived in the time of our Lord, shewed their opposition by persecuting him in the most cruel manner, even unto death ; and persons of the same class are to be found abundantly in every generation and country. The people who are really united to Christ by his Spirit, must not therefore be surprised, if they find the same worldly principles producing similar effects against themselves. It is, however, awful to reflect, that many professing christians are in reality of the world, in spite of their profession ; and that the knowledge of what Christ has done and said, only aggravates the evil of their condition, seeing that, as nominal christians, “ they have no cloke for their sin.”

#### QUESTIONS.

How do I know that I am not of the world, but of the true people of Christ ?

Do those who are evidently of the world treat me with any dislike or opposition ?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit to unite you to Christ, and for the fulness of his power to overcome sin in you, and to bring forth the fruit of good works in you abundantly.

2. Pray that every affliction or trouble you experience, may tend to make you bring forth much fruit to the glory of God.

3. Pray for grace to be watchful and jealous over your own heart, lest you should grieve the Holy Spirit, and lose your evidence that you are united to Christ.

4. Ask for a spirit of confidence in prayer, arising from faith in God's promises to the people united with Christ.

5. Pray for a just sense of God's love towards you, and an enlarged affection of heart towards his people, and ask to be kept distinct by separating in spirit from the world.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Gracious and merciful God, give me, I pray thee, that great and precious gift—thy Holy Spirit; that I may be made one with Christ thy blessed Son, and in His strength may become strong to resist sin, and to overcome the devil, the world, and the flesh. May that Spirit work in me effectually to will and to do of thy good pleasure; making me fruitful in all good works, to the glory of the name of Christ Jesus. (2) Wherein soever thou perceivest me to need correction, grant that I may not be left without such purification as may make me more holy, and more fruitful. (3) Give me thy grace, I implore thee, that I may be vigilant, and alarmed at every appearance of sin in myself, quick in conscience, and jealous over my own affections; so that I may never grieve thy Holy Spirit, nor be left to the darkness of doubt concerning my union with my Saviour. (4) Grant that my sense of the blessed privilege of union with him, may enable me to come to thee in full confidence that thy fatherly love will willingly grant all that thy Spirit prompts me to ask. (5) Make me to know thy love, O God; teach me to measure it by thy love to Jesus Christ, and thy great gift of him for sinners. Let this thy love enlarge my heart towards all those whom thou lovest, and for whom he died. Let that love shine so brightly in me, that I may be evidently one of thy people, and plainly not of the world. Make me thus to glorify thee, by bringing forth the fruit of a branch abiding in the vine, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

## ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THIRD PORTION.

The discourse of consolation continued.—*Discourse, No. 30.*

PLACE.—*The Supper-chamber in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*The Evening of Thursday in Passion Week—the day before his death.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. John's Gospel, chapter xvi.

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

JOHN xvi. verse

- |                |                   |                                       |
|----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 7. expedient   | <i>means here</i> | good, useful                          |
| 21. in travail | .....             | in child-birth                        |
| anguish        | .....             | great pain                            |
| 25. proverbs   | .....             | sayings difficult to<br>be understood |

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

Our Lord continued his parting address to his disciples.

What he had said to them in the former part of his discourse, was meant to prevent them from being confused as to the truth, and so stumbling, when they should afterwards find such things happen to them, as they would not have expected, unless he had warned them. Their profession of being his disciples would bring upon them such opposition from the Jews, that they would be cast out of the synagogue—that is, excommunicated

(see vol. iv. page 71); and even more than this, there would be a time when to kill a christian would be thought an acceptable offering to God. The Jews would act thus, because they had lost the knowledge of the true God ; and were equally ignorant of Jesus, the Messiah. But Jesus warned his disciples of all this, in order that when it actually came to pass they might recollect, how he had foretold it ; and might not, therefore, be surprised at such a consequence of their faith. It was not necessary to have explained this to them before, as he himself was upon earth, bearing the brunt of all opposition, and at hand to explain each case as it occurred. Now, however, he was going to the Father who had sent him, as He had already told them (John xiv. 12, 28).: they had not however enquired of him where he was going to, because their minds had been taken up with distress at the prospect of the opposition and trouble they would have to pass through. But they need not be thus distressed ; it was for their good that he should quit them : for unless he were to leave the earth, and go to the Father, the Holy Spirit, of whom he had already spoken to them as the Comforter (John xiv. 16, 26. See page 61), would not come to them ; but Jesus, when he was gone into heaven, would send him to his disciples.

And then our Lord explained what effects would be produced by this coming of the Holy Ghost, upon one who belongs to the world : his conscience will become "convinced," or convicted, of three things ; the Holy Spirit will inwardly tax him, and convict him (which is the meaning of the word *reprove*, or *convince*, as in the margin) with respect to sin, with respect to righteousness, and



with respect to judgment. Jesus was pleased to throw some further light upon what he meant by the reproving conviction of these three things. The reproving conviction of sin, produced by the Holy Ghost, is not merely a sense of the wickedness of those offences which are contrary to God's law, written in the natural heart, such as murder, adultery, theft, lying, &c.; but when the Holy Ghost comes, he reproves the heart with a conviction of the sin of not believing on Jesus Christ, and not receiving his words as the words of eternal truth. So also as regards the second point. The reproving conviction of righteousness, produced by the Holy Ghost, is not a sense that the works which we have done ourselves are righteous and just in the sight of God; but the Holy Spirit rather reproves us regarding our own works, by convincing us of the necessity of a perfect righteousness, in order that any man may appear in the presence of God; while at the same time he shows us such a righteousness, fully worked out by the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of man (John viii. 46. 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 22. 1 John iii. 5. Heb. iv. 15), for the purpose of being placed to the account of his people before God (1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Cor. v. 21. Rom. iii. 22. Phil. iii. 9. Jer. xxiii. 6); and in proof of that perfect righteousness, the Comforter convinces us that Christ, who was seen upon earth, is gone, as a man, to heaven, and is in the presence of the Father by his own righteousness, now that we can see him no more amongst us. In the same manner as regards the third point. The reproving conviction of judgment, produced by the Holy Ghost, is not merely a sense that persons who have committed great

sins plainly offensive to the law of the Ten Commandments, will one day be called to account for them ; but the Holy Ghost conveys a more correct impression of the nature of the judgment to come, by shewing that the prince of this world is judged ; and that the judgment passes upon his whole system of government, which is according to the course of this world—according to the prince of the power of the air—the ruler of the darkness of this world (Eph. ii. 2 ; vi. 12. 2 Cor. iv. 4) ; and that thus the judgment includes a great deal more, and is according to a very different standard from that imagined by the unregenerate mind of man.

Jesus told his disciples that there were many subjects on which he wished to speak to them, besides those he had already mentioned ; but that their minds were not yet in a state to receive this knowledge. When, however, that Comforting and supporting Spirit of Truth was come to them, he would not stop short (as Christ had seen it necessary to do) in his communications of the truth God meant to impart to them, but would guide them fully ; for the knowledge he would convey would be drawn from the fountain head, and would be imparted to them as received from the Father. The Holy Spirit would show the disciples future things, before they came to pass. It should be His office to glorify Christ, in communicating to men such things concerning Him, as shall be delivered to the Comforter for that purpose. Jesus partakes in all that God the Father has : what belongs to the one belongs to the other also ; for which reason our Lord said that it shall be those things that relate, and belong

to Jesus, which the Holy Spirit shall take and impress upon the minds and hearts of his disciples on earth. Our Lord then said that for a little while his disciples would lose sight of him from amongst them; and that afterwards they should see him again, for a little while before he ascended to the Father. (John xvi. 7; xiv. 16—19.) Upon hearing this, some of the Apostles could not forbear asking one another, what could be the meaning of his words: they repeated them over amongst themselves, but they could not understand them.

Jesus, who knew what was in man's heart (John ii. 24, 25), was perfectly aware that they wished to inquire of him as to what he had meant, He asked them whether they were not trying to make out the meaning of his saying, that for a little while they should lose sight of him, and for a little while afterwards should see him again? He told them with affectionate earnestness, that his enemies, the people of the world, would be rejoicing, whilst they themselves should be cast into deep grief. Their sorrow would be great, but it would afterwards be turned into joy. The feelings they would have to undergo might be compared to those of a woman in child-birth: when her hour of labour arrives, she is in great distress, but as soon as her delivery has taken place, all the pain she suffered is forgotten, being entirely overcome by the joy of receiving her new-born child: even so his disciples would have first of all to pass through the sorrow; but Christ would shew himself to them again, and then they would have a rejoicing of heart, of which they could not afterwards be deprived. When the time of that joy

should come, the day in which the Spirit of Christ teaches his disciples, they would have no need to inquire of him the meaning of his spiritual communications; they might then apply to the Father's throne of grace, in His name, and their requests would be granted. Up to the time when he was speaking to them, his disciples had never approached God thus, in the name of Jesus Christ, because the work of the Saviour had not been fully wrought: this however would have been accomplished before the time he referred to—the day of the Holy Ghost: then therefore his disciples might act upon his atonement and mediation—they might ask in his name, and they should receive what they asked; that the joy to which he had bid them look forward might be abundant. He had spoken to them on these subjects in language which it was then difficult for them to understand; but by and bye there would be no more necessity for this, his language would not be difficult, for he would shew them in a plain manner suited to them, and applied to them by God; that would be the time when they should make their petitions at the throne of grace, in the name of Jesus; and it was not necessary for him to assure them that he would inquire on their behalf concerning the Father's willingness to grant what they ask for. God the Father himself loves the disciples of Christ; he sees in them their love for Christ, and their faith in him as sent from the Father. Jesus repeated the declaration of this truth for the confirmation of that faith; he declared, that he was come forth from the Father, and come as the Son of man into the world; and that he was shortly about to leave the world, and return to the Father.

In order to make this explanation of the passage from the 23—28 verses of this chapter correspond with the text in our bibles, it may be necessary to state, that the English word "*ask*" is used to represent two different Greek words; both of which mean indeed to ask, but one implying a mode and motive for the asking very different from the other; this difference our translators have not specially noticed in their manner of giving the English; but it is necessary to be understood in order to gather the sense clearly. The first verb used in the 23d verse is one which may be properly rendered, by the word to *question*, or to *enquire* of, and therefore to *ask*, this word is used in the 5th verse, where the words "none of you questioneth me" clearly represents the true meaning; it is also used in the 19th verse, where the sense will be seen to be "they were desirous to *question* him." The second time the word ask is used in the 23rd verse, it represents another Greek word, the meaning of which may be said to be, to *request*, or to *petition*; and this is the same word which is repeated twice in the 24th verse, and once at the beginning of the 26th; in which latter verse, the contrast between the two words is again made in a manner similar to that occurring in the 23rd verse. To make this plain, it may be useful to read the English, altering the single word *ask* into the word *question* when that word occurs in Greek, and *petition* when the other occurs; the passage will then be read thus:—

Verse 23, And in that day ye shall *question* me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall *petition* the Father in my name, he

he will give it you. 24. Hitherto have ye *petitioned* nothing in my name : *petition*, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Verse 26. At that day ye shall *petition* in my name : and I say not unto you, that I will *question* the Father for you. 27. For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

This last declaration of our Lord the disciples seemed fully to have understood ; and accordingly they told him, that he spake now plainly, and without any difficulty in his words : they were now convinced that he knew all things, even the secrets of the heart, and it was not necessary that any one should question him ; what he had said convinced them, that he had indeed come forth from God.

Jesus asked them, did they now think that they had real trust in him ? He warned them that the time was close at hand, when they would be all dispersed, every one trying to hide himself in his own home, leaving their master alone : but still, in the true sense, he could never be alone, for God the Father was ever with him. What he had said to them, was meant to comfort them, and give them that peace which could only be found by abiding in him. (John xiv. 27 ; xv. 5—7.) Distress and trouble awaited them in the world ; but they were to be cheerful, and to rejoice in spite of this ; for Jesus, in whom his disciples believe and abide, assures them that he has overcome the world. (1 John v. 4, 5.)

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture. See No. II.

## VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. Some of the applications already made of the former parts of this discourse, will readily suggest themselves in connexion with the present portion. Besides these, it is important that we should observe the great difference between the reproofs of a conscience convinced by the Holy Ghost of the sin of living far from Christ and practically denying him, and that working of conscience which goes no further than to give testimony to the holiness and justice of God's moral law, by which greater crimes are plainly forbidden. This latter state of conscience accommodates itself to the notions of right and wrong, established by the customs of the world ; and may exist where there is no spiritual life at all. Every body feels that murder is wicked ; and no one will make an open boast of adultery, robbery, or lying. When any form of these things is tolerated in the world, some pretence of excuse is imagined—some false notion covers the crime : so that, in fact, its real wickedness is acknowledged. It does not need any special influence of the Holy Ghost, to waken a sense of shame in a murderer, an adulterer, a cheat, or a liar. Such a person may be struck with regret and remorse, without having any sense of the need of atonement, or any knowledge of what sin has caused Christ to suffer. On the other hand, persons who have lived, so as fully to satisfy the world, and their own natural hearts—who have conducted themselves kindly and amiably—are taught by the Holy Spirit, that their best works have not only fallen short of what God justly requires in his creatures, but that all their works have been corrupted by wrong motives ; which

have, in fact, worshipped the creature more than the Creator. A person so taught, perceives the absolute necessity for an atonement; and knowing of the atonement of the Lamb of God, who beareth the sin of the world, his conscience reproves him as a sinner, for producing that great sacrifice, and for neglecting the knowledge of it; and thus he is convinced of sin, because he believes not on Christ.

#### QUESTIONS.

Of what nature are my convictions of sin? Do they result merely from a sense of having offended against the moral law?

Are they regulated by the general view of that law which appears in the customs of the world?

What connection have they with the sufferings of Christ?

What notion do they suggest to me of the power of faith in Christ, and of the weakness of my own faith?

2. The second point mentioned by our Lord as the effect produced by the Holy Spirit upon His coming into the heart, is the reproving conviction of righteousness. The Holy Spirit teaches the perfectness of that righteousness which is required by God; and at the same time shews that it has been fulfilled by that one man, who is gone to the Father, and we see him no more. The conviction of both these truths acts as a reproof of our own short-comings and disobedience, when we take our own righteousness into consideration: so that by his reproof we are humbled personally; while, by the conviction of Christ's righteousness, the Spirit applies the comfort of his salvation to our hearts. This conviction of righteousness is not always given by the Holy Spirit at the time that He convinces of sin; at least the assurance of salvation, which is the result of that righteousness fully applied, is not given to all the children



of God in Christ Jesus. The remaining infection of original sin often concurs with our great infirmities to hinder the reasonable effect of such conviction, in comforting us with a sense of the certainty of our salvation ; but, however we may be prevented by the state of our own hearts from profiting by the gracious teaching of the Holy Ghost on this point, our personal difficulties or doubts do not alter the purpose and mercy of God in Christ ; and, as Christ has worked a perfect righteousness for us, the conviction of it will be afforded to us in his own good time, by the power of the same Spirit, who begins his work by convincing us of sin, because we believe not on Christ.

#### QUESTIONS.

In what point of view do I consider that the righteousness of Christ is concerned in the work of my salvation ?

Do I imagine that an imperfect righteousness could gain me admittance into the presence of God ?

What do I consider my own righteousness to be ?

How far am I assured of my personal salvation through the atonement and righteousness of Christ Jesus ?

What is it that hinders me from enjoying this assurance ?

3. The third point, on which the presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart may be known by its effects, is the view that is taken of the judgment under which the world lies, in the person of its prince. When the Holy Spirit has taught a sinner the true nature of sin, in connection with the work of Christ ; it necessarily follows that the reproving conviction which he has felt concerning himself, he feels to be equally applicable to all those his fellow-sinners, whose condition is similar to that which was his own. Having ceased to be of the world, he is able to see, as from a distance,

the true state of the worldly ; and that which was a painful reproof to himself, becomes an alarmed conviction concerning the companions whom he has left. To know them to be in the slavery of Satan, and to know Satan and his slaves to be under the wrath of God, is the teaching of the Holy Ghost ; and when there has been true conversion, no part of the change is more striking to the person himself, than the different view he takes of the world, its motives, its principles, its course, and its end. No person has a good testimony that the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, has impressed him with the saving knowledge of Christ, unless there be in him such a sense of the sin of worldliness, and of the danger of worldly habits in society, as ought to arise from a conviction of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

#### QUESTIONS.

What is my opinion of the world ?

How far do I justify its habits, by consenting to the excuses usually made for worldliness ?

Have I realized the certainty that the spirit of evil is the prince and the ruler of the course of this world ?

How far does this make me cautious in combining with worldly people upon principles in which God is not distinctly acknowledged ?

4. Our Lord declares that it is the office of the Holy Spirit to guide his people into the knowledge and practice of all that truth which is intended to be made known to man in his present condition. This is not confined only to the principles of truth, or to the statement of truth belonging to times past : it is peculiarly his office to glorify Christ ; and in doing so, he sheds a light upon the word of prophecy, by which an humble christian may be

able to look forward to the things to come, when "the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." The reality and certainty of the glorious things to come, are made by the Spirit means of comforting and strengthening the humble-minded christian; while they are placed beyond the reach of the learning of the wise men of the world, to whom the Comforter has not taken of the things of Christ, and shewn them for his glory.

## QUESTIONS.

How far is the glory of Christ the main object of my spiritual thoughts?

To what do I look forward in thinking of the future glory of Christ?

Have I searched the Scriptures, in dependance upon the teaching of the Spirit, in order to find what is revealed of the glory of Christ in the things to come?

How far have I read the prophetic parts of Scripture with a view to apply them personally in glorifying Christ?

5. The extraordinary power mercifully given by God to the exercise of spiritual prayer, by those who abide in Christ, was pointed out in the last portion. (See page 82.) Here again it is strongly stated; and the contrast which is drawn between that mode of asking which is confined to a mere inquiry, and that confident petition which results from the possession of a covenant, founded upon the all-sufficient work of Christ's atonement, makes the statement of this blessed power to be the more striking. With the reverend and humbled feeling of sinners, who know themselves to be unworthy of the least of God's mercies, we may yet mix in our prayers that faithful confidence, which may justly belong to those who, in praying, are

sent upon a message to the throne of grace, in the name of One who has a right to that for which he bids us ask ; and though we obtain our petitions in His name, yet it is for our own benefit and comfort that God gives us what we ask for.

QUESTIONS.

What has been the general tone and character of my prayers ?

Have I made my petitions with enquiring doubtfulness, or have I asked, in Christ's name, with confiding faith ?

- Have the great promises to prayer made me forget my own unworthiness when I have been praying ? or, has a sense of my own unworthiness made me forget the sure ground of the promises to prayer—that is, the work of Christ for me ?

6. It is painful to observe that the disciples were most confident in the strength of their own faith, just at the moment when the trial to which it was about to be put shewed its great weakness, of which our Lord warned them. The Apostles were not at this time under the powerful teaching of the Holy Ghost, which shortly afterwards enabled them to see both their own weakness, and His strength ; but there are many christians, even in these days, when the Holy Spirit has come from on high and is abiding with his church, who prove too plainly that the infirmity of human nature leads them oftentimes to make as false an estimate of the strength of their own faith, as these disciples did. It is only when our faith has been tried, and supported through the trial, that we ought to make use of the language of the disciples “now are we sure that we believe.” This instance of their mistaken confidence teaches us the importance of that exhortation, “let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” (1 Cor. x. 12.)

QUESTIONS.

Does my conviction of the reality of my faith arise only from my feelings upon reading the word of God ?

To what trials has my faith been subjected ? and how far has the result agreed with my previous notion of it ?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for the true conviction of sin by the Holy Spirit ?
2. Pray for the true conviction of righteousness by the Holy Spirit ?
3. Pray for the true conviction of judgment by the Holy Spirit ?
4. Pray that the Spirit may guide you into all truth ; and especially shew you the things of Christ which belong to His future glory ?
5. Pray to be rightly directed in your prayers, so as to be humbled with a sense of your own unworthiness ; while you are confident in the power of the name of Christ, to secure the answer to your prayers.
6. Pray for an humble and cautious spirit in judging of your own faith.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Gracious God, teach me to pray. Father, for Christ's sake, give me the Holy Spirit. Come Holy Ghost, enter into my heart ; enlighten my understanding ; and convince me of sin. Let me not be satisfied with discovering those offences which might be detected by the light of nature ; but do thou shew me the sinfulness of sin, as it is seen in connection with the Lord Jesus Christ. Manifest to me even the iniquity of my holy things ; and pardon all my sins, for Christ's sake.

(2) Come Holy Ghost, and convince me of righteousness ; reprove me for my own unrighteousness ; impress me with the truth that God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, that I may take comfort when I remember that my Saviour, who was without spot or taint of sin, is gone to the Father, and is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Teach me how to make my calling and election sure ; and comfort me with a full assurance of faith, that I shall be found, not

having my own righteousness which is of the law, but the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ. (3) Come Holy Ghost, and quicken me from the death of sin, and the blindness of the world, that I may see the true condition of those who are of the world : and convince me of the judgment under which they lie, as the servants of the prince of this world, who is judged. (4) Come, Holy Ghost, and guide me into all truth. Take of the things of Christ, and show them unto me, that I may glorify him now ; and shew me things to come. that I may prepare to enter into his glory hereafter. (5) Come Holy Ghost, teach me to pray ; give me that confidence in thy word, that may lead me humbly to petition the throne of grace, for what thou hast faithfully promised to give. I acknowledge my unworthiness of the least of thy favours ; but I plead thy promise to bestow the greatest of them, even the gift of the Eternal Son, to be a man, and die for my sins. (6) Teach me to be humble in spirit, to mistrust myself, and so to judge myself weak, that I may ever flee to thee for strength, to the glory of the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

# ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOURTH PORTION.

The Lord's own Prayer.

PLACE.—*The Supper-chamber in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*The Evening of Thursday in Passion Week—the day before his death.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. John's Gospel, chapter xvii.

## III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

JOHN xvii. verse

2. all flesh *means here* all men

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

Having finished his discourse of consolation, our Lord entered openly into communion with the Father by prayer. Often as the disciples had known him to be occupied privately in prayer, this was the first time that he had ever allowed them to hear him pray. Looking upwards, he said, the time was come ; and he asked that he might be glorified as the Son of Man, in order that, as such, he might glorify his Father. He prayed that this glory might be manifested, in that the power which the Father had given him over all mankind might be put forth, by Christ's bestowing the gift of eternal life to all those persons whom the Father had given to him for that purpose (John vi. 37) : and that eternal life of

which he spake, would be imparted to them through the knowledge of the Father, as the only true God; and of himself, as the Messiah, whom He had sent. Jesus had shewn forth God's glory on earth (John i. 14); he had thus far completed the work, which God had appointed for him amongst men. And now he prayed the Father to take him again to that superior glory with himself in heaven, which he had enjoyed before the world had been made. He had taught the power of God's name to those persons whom God had selected from amongst the rest of the world, and given unto Christ. They belonged to the Father, who gave them to the Son; and they had kept the word which the Son had given them. For they had at length come to understand, that every thing which he had done had been given to him of the Father. For he had imparted the words given to him of God to speak; these disciples had received them as such, and had been convinced that he came forth from God, fully believing his divine commission. (John xvi. 29, 30.) It was on their behalf he was now pleading; not on behalf of the rest of the world, from amongst whom they were chosen, but for the selected ones thus given to Christ, and belonging to the Father. (verse 6.) Everything that belonged to Christ, belonged to God; and what belonged to God, belonged to Christ, and Christ's glory is shewn forth in them. He was now about to leave the world; but his disciples would remain in the world whilst he went to the Father. Therefore he besought the Father, to keep in the faith of His name those whom He had thus given to his Son, that they might all be



united as God's children, even as God the Father and the Son are one. While Jesus was with them, he had preserved them in that one name ; and not one who had joined him under that name had been lost, except Judas, who, being the child of evil, belonged to the lost ones ; and this had been permitted, according to what had been foretold of him in the Scriptures. Jesus was about to return to the Father ; but whilst yet upon earth, he sought these blessings for his disciples, in order that they whom he left behind might have his joy abounding in their hearts. (John xvi. 22, 24.) Jesus had imparted to them God's message, which had produced a change in their hearts, so that they were no longer like the rest of the world, but had become of the same spirit with himself, who was not of the world ; and the consequence was, that the world hated them. (2 Cor. v. 17, 18.) Jesus did not ask that they should be removed from living amongst the people of the world, but that they should be preserved from the wickedness of the world : that, as they did not belong to the world any more than Jesus himself, so they might be made and kept holy in the power of God's truth, revealed in his word. As the Father had sent Christ into the world with a message of mercy, so Christ sent his disciples with the same message. And for their sakes Jesus had also taken the fulness of the Holy Ghost, that they also might receive of that Spirit, and be made holy in receiving the truth. (John iii. 34 ; i. 16.)

Jesus offered his prayer not only for the eleven Apostles who were present at the time ; but he also included all persons who, from that time

forward, should be brought to believe in him through the Gospel, which these Apostles were to be the first to preach : all such he desired might be brought into the same oneness of spirit, which he had already asked for the apostles themselves (ver. 11) ; that as God was in Christ, and Christ in God, so also all his disciples might be spiritual, united by the Holy Ghost, as one in the Father and the Son ; in order that in them the people of the world might have a testimony, that Jesus was indeed sent into the world by God. The imparted glory, which God had given to Jesus as the Christ, Jesus had also given to his disciples, in order to produce amongst them this oneness, like the oneness of the Father and the Son ; Christ being in his disciples, and God in Christ. This blessed union he prayed might be more and more perfected in them ; so that the whole world might know that Jesus was indeed sent from God, who has loved the disciples with the love that he bears to Jesus himself. (1 John vi. 10. Rev. iii. 21.) Jesus then expressed his desire respecting those whom the Father has given to him ; that they might in the end be with Jesus in his kingdom, and might see the glory given to him, whom the Father had loved before the world was made. (Phil. i. 6.) Our blessed Lord concluded this wonderful prayer, by appealing to the righteous Father : the people of the world had no knowledge of him, but Jesus had perfect knowledge of him ; and his disciples were convinced that he had sent Jesus, who had already taught them the power of God's name, and would continue to do so by his Spirit, in order that the Father's love for the Son might be imparted to them, and that Christ himself might dwell in them.

## V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture. See No. II.

## VI. THE APPLICATION.

This prayer may be said to be a specimen of the constant mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ for his people. It is in reality the Lord's own prayer: that which we call the Lord's prayer being rather our prayer, which the Lord has commanded us to use; whereas this is the Lord's prayer which he used for us. This was the only occasion upon which Jesus was pleased to permit his disciples to be present, as it were, at his intercourse with the Father; and it contains the most precious testimony as to the subjects for which he intercedes on behalf of his people. From this, we may know what the Lord desires for us; and may learn, by God's grace, to desire the same things for ourselves, as well as to strive diligently to forward the objects for which Christ prays to the Father. There are four principal subjects in this divine prayer:

1. Jesus prayed for the completing of his own glory, and of the glory of his people with him. This must always be the great object of every true christian. All faithful disciples must look forward with hearty desire to the setting up of Christ's glorious kingdom upon earth; remembering that, if they be indeed true christians now, they will then be partakers of that glory with him. And this desire, truly felt, is sure to make every christian more diligent in setting forth the glory of Christ now, by his life and conversation; and this greatly promotes the second point, specially set forth in this our Lord's own prayer: for,

2. Secondly, Jesus prayed that his people might be all united, and be one in heart and spirit. This union amongst christians is a high privilege, and a great blessing, and therefore, as might be expected, it is specially opposed by Satan. He readily finds ways to hinder it, by working upon the natural corruption of every man's heart, which has a tendency selfishly to separate itself, and its own interest, from that of any other person. Christ prays however, that we all may be one; and the thought that he does so, is one of the most powerful means of overcoming our selfishness, and enlarging our love towards those whom he prays for equally with ourselves.

3. A third point in this divine prayer, is the distinction between the people of Christ, for whom he prays, and the world, for whom (he says) he does not pray. This is an affecting distinction in every respect; it should affect christians with a lively sense of the undeserved goodness of Jesus, in making them the subject of his intercession. It should affect them with a deep sense of compassionate alarm for those who are not included in this great privilege; and, as every christian must be connected by earthly ties with many persons who at present seem to be of the world, it should quicken our endeavours to bring all such to the saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

4. There can hardly be a greater source of power and comfort, than that which true christians may gather from a fourth point in this divine prayer, for in it the Lord Jesus expressed his love for those whom God the Father had given him, those whose names are written in the

book of life, shall be with him in glory. There are many passages of Scripture which confirm this blessed truth, of which we have here a ground of assurance. (Luke iv. 25—27. Rom. viii. 28—31. Eph. i. 11, 12. 1 Thess. v. 9, 10.) As we know not the individuals who are given by God the Father to the Son, it becomes a matter of the deepest interest to ascertain, each for himself, whether he is growing into that conformity with Christ's image, and increasing in that love of God, which it has been determined beforehand, that all whom he has given to Christ should attain. This is the only way by which we can make our calling and election sure to ourselves ; but just in proportion as we are growing sure of this, we may increase in the power to become so, by looking to this prayer, in which Jesus declares his desire that all the elected ones shall be with him in glory. The certainty of this is especially calculated to strengthen us, by God's blessing, in the way of holiness ; and to comfort us in the time of trial and temptation.

## QUESTIONS.

Ain I in the habit of looking forward to the glory of Christ in his kingdom ? and what effect does this produce upon my desire to be with him in glory ?

How far am I one with Christ's true people ? Do my affections go out towards them ? and in what respect does my desire for unity influence my conduct ?

How do I value the privilege of being prayed for by the Lord Jesus Christ ? and how do I feel towards the world for whom he does not pray ? what effect have these feelings in making me strive to bring worldly people under the influence of true religion ?

What effect is produced in my heart by the knowledge of Christ's desire that his people shall be glorified with him? How far has it increased my diligence in striving to make my calling and election sure?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

Instead of suggesting any other heads for prayer, the whole scripture may be used as such, that we may pray in imitation of the Lord's own prayer.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

O Heavenly Father, we humbly thank thee that the hour is come when thy only begotten Son is glorified in his Kingdom of Grace, that he may glorify thee in the hearts and by the lives of his people. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him, we beseech thee to give us that life eternal, by making us to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. He has glorified thee on the earth, he has finished the work which thou gavest him to do. He has died for our sins, and risen again for our justification, and has ascended up on high, where thou dost glorify him with thine own self with the glory which he had with thee before the world was. Do thou, O glorified Saviour, speedily manifest thy name to all those whom the Father gave thee out of the world. Enable us, to keep thy word. Give us the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to guide us into all truth, that we may know that all things are given to thee of the Father. As thou hast given us the words of the Father, so give us grace to receive them; and

make us surely know that thou camest out from the Father. Increase our faith : Lord we believe, help thou our unbelief. Thou great High Priest that ever livest to make intercession for us,—thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father,—pray for us. Speedily accomplish the number of thine elect, and hasten thy kingdom. Keep us from the love of the world, and let us not be like unto those for whom thou prayest not. Glorify thyself in us by making our light to shine before men, so that they may see our good works and glorify thee, who workest in us to will and to do of thy good pleasure. Thou art no more in the world as thou wast of old, thou art with the Father, but, we beseech thee, remember thy people who abide in the world, and leave us not comfortless. Keep us through thine own name ; make us to be one with thee by thy Spirit. As thou hast kept us unto this hour, O keep us to the end ; keep us, we pray thee, from falling,—let us take heed lest we fall. Let us not grieve thy Spirit lest he depart from us. Let us tremble while we remember the son of perdition, who walked with thee on earth, and is lost. We humbly bless and praise thy holy name for the words which thou hast left for our learning : open our understandings that we may understand thy word ; and give us hearts to love it, that we may have peace in believing, and that thy joy may be fulfilled in us. In the strength of thy word let us take up our cross, and follow thee. Preserve us from being conformed to the world, and from fearing it. We desire to possess our souls in patience, and to remain in the circumstances which thou seest

to be good for us. We ask not to be taken out of the world, until it seemeth right to thee ; only do thou keep us from the evil of the world, and from the evil one, who is the prince of it. Sanctify us through thy truth ; make us conformed to thine image. Make us holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. In all our necessary intercourse with the world make us to shine with thy light, and to adorn thy doctrine, O God our Saviour, in all things. And as for our sakes thou didst sanctify thyself in the flesh, and hast received the Spirit without measure, so we implore thee to impart a measure of thy Spirit to us, that we may be sanctified through thy truth. And let thy word run and be glorified. Revive thy work ; pour out thy Spirit through the appointed channels ; bless the ministry of thy word, that many may believe on thee, through the preaching of thy Gospel ; and let such as shall be saved be added to the church daily. Perfect the church, which is thy body, in the unity of the Spirit, and in the bond of peace ; enable thy people to know thy love which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God, and may make known unto the world the mystery of thy love. We praise thee for the blessed assurance that thy people shall be glorified with thee, and shall behold thy glory which thou hadst before the foundation of the world. Prepare us for that world of honor and immortality ; let the prospect of it comfort our hearts, and strengthen them for thy service, in the midst of an unbelieving world. We thank thee, gracious Saviour, for the knowledge of the Father which thou hast given us



through faith in thee : increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in us, that the love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts, and that thou mayst dwell in us for evermore. Amen.

Our Father, &c.



## ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIFTH PORTION.

Third prophecy of Peter's denial.—*Conversation, No. 64.*

PLACE.—*Over Cedron.*

TIME.—*Evening of Thursday in Passion week—The day  
before his death.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. Matth. Gospel, c. xxvi. ver. 30 to 35.

St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xiv. ver. 26 to 31.

St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxii. ver. 39.

St. John's Gospel, chap. xviii. verse 1.

### III. THE MEANINGS;

There is no word used in this portion, the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

As soon as our Lord had finished his prayer to his Father, in the hearing of his disciples, they all joined in singing a hymn; which was probably a portion of the usual thanksgiving Psalms, called the Psalms of praise, with which the Jews commonly closed the Passover, and which consisted of the 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th Psalms. After this was done Jesus left the Supper-chamber, and his disciples followed him; they went out of the city, and across the little stream named Cedron, which ran on the east of Jerusalem; thence they proceeded towards the mount of Olives, which was our Lord's customary walk. It must have been late—past eleven o'clock at night; but the moon was within two days of the full, and therefore it would be bright moon light at that

hour. As they were walking along Jesus addressed his disciples, and told them that in the course of that night every one of them would be so alarmed and afraid of confessing him, that they would be ensnared into a sinful fall on his account; but this would fulfil what had been written in the prophecy of Zechariah (xiii. 7,) "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." Nevertheless he assured them, that after he should have risen from the grave, he would meet them at an appointed place in Galilee to which he would lead them.

Upon hearing this, the warm heart of Peter impelled him to make the same remark which he had already twice repeated; although upon both these occasions he had been checked by the reply of Jesus (John xiii.<sup>1</sup> 37, 38, see page 30. Luke xxii. 33, 34, see page 37.) Not profiting however by our Lord's former rebukes, the earnest Peter now a third time declared that even if every body else were to be frightened into a sinful denial of Jesus, yet certainly he never would. To this our Lord replied by repeating the warning he had already given him; he assured him that, before the day they had entered upon, (that is the Friday, which began at six o'clock on what we call Thursday evening)—nay before the present night should pass away,—that is, by the next rising of the sun, notice of which would be given at the early cock-crow, and the rays of which would be seen at the second cock-crow,—Peter would have three times denied that he knew any thing of Jesus. Peter's feelings were excited by this distinct repetition of our Lord's prophecy concerning his denial; and he only spoke the more warmly and earnestly, declaring that nothing on earth should induce him

to behave in the manner supposed by our Lord ; if he were called upon to die with Jesus, he would willingly do so rather than deny him. After so distinct and fervent a declaration by Peter, the other ten Apostles were emboldened to come forward, and to make the same declaration.

We have already passed two occasions, upon which Peter ventured to boast of his own faithfulness and courage in not denying Christ ; and now we hear of a third occasion. Because each of these boasts is reported by a different evangelist, few persons have so compared the accounts, as to perceive that each of them was made by Peter at a time different from the others : hence it has been commonly taken for granted that Peter made this boast but once. Whereas in fact it appears, that St. John reported the first occasion of Peter's boldness, which took place immediately after Judas left the supper chamber (John xiii. 30—38) ; and that St. Luke reported the repetition of Peter's boldness, and the Lord's prophecy of his weakness. This second occasion occurred in consequence of our Lord's directly warning Peter of Satan's desire to sift the disciples as wheat. (Luke xxii. 31—34.) These two occasions, occurred within the supper chamber ; the present is evidently a third, and took place in the course of the walk from Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives ; the particulars of which are reported by both St. Matthew and St. Mark. Thus we find a beautiful fitness between the denial three times repeated, and the boast likewise repeated three times, together with the warning ; and also the thrice repeated question of our Lord after his resurrection, which applied so pointedly to the conscience of Peter. (John xxi. 15—17.)

## V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures, See No. II.

## VI. THE APPLICATION.

From the repetition of Peter's bold self-confidence, we see the obstinacy with which such a dangerous feeling keeps possession of the mind, where it has once been allowed to grow. Peter was sincere ; he had no notion that any thing could shake him from the faithfulness of which he felt himself conscious ; and yet in the event he gave a striking evidence of want of courage, in denying his master. And in like manner we, by looking only upon the sincere intentions which occupy our minds while we are left undisturbed, make a false estimate of our own power ;—we neglect the difficult work of self-examination, and do not duly take into account the weakness and corruption which cleaves to our hearts, and is sure to show itself in the hour of trial and temptation. The habit of viewing our characters only according to what we ought to be, and wish to be, is sure to prepare the way for an humbling fall ; every statement of it that we make commits us to ourselves so much the more, and leads us to put aside all secret misgivings : so that once pledged by a boast, we are ready to repeat our assertion, and to defend our own powers. But when the time of trial comes, it will surely be found, that he who has looked more to his own weakness and to the failings of which he has been guilty ; and who has been thereby led completely to give up all confidence in himself, and to depend only upon the help of Christ's Spirit for the power of doing any thing good, such an one will find himself stand upright in the midst of trials and temptations which he feared would over-

whelm him ; while on the other hand, the self-confident man will find himself fall, like Peter, under temptations which he had utterly despised.

#### QUESTIONS.

What points in my character do I habitually regard and think upon ? those that are behind, or those that are before and still to be attained ?

Do I fancy that I should certainly be able to resist some particular temptation, which seems quite unlikely to ensnare me ? and to whose strength am I looking for power to resist this or any temptation ?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

Pray that you may be always kept in an humble sense of your own weakness and readiness to fall into sin, and may look to Christ alone for help in every temptation.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

Gracious God, who knowest the secrets of our hearts, and seest that I have no power of myself to help myself, give thy Holy Spirit to keep me humbly sensible that I am always prone to fall into sin : let me not regard any thing that seems good in myself, but convince me of my own sinful weakness, so that even whilst I think I stand, I may take heed lest I fall. From all self-confidence, good Lord, deliver me ; and in every temptation, keep me from trusting to my own strength, and hold me up by the strength of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Our Father &c.

# ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SIXTH PORTION.

The Agony in the Garden.

PLACE.—*Gethsemane.*

TIME.—*The Evening of Thursday in Passion Week—the day before his death.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvi. v. 36 to 46.

St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xiv. ver. 32 to 42.

St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxii. ver. 40 to 46.

St. John's Gospel, chap. xviii. verse 1.

## III. THE MEANINGS;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

Mark xiv. verse

33. sore amazed *means here* extremely distressed

40. wist they ..... did they know

Luke xxii. verse

41. withdrawn ..... at a distance

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

Our Lord proceeded with his eleven disciples, in the bright moonlight, to the foot of the Mount of Olives, where there was a garden, known by the name of Gethsemane; the meaning of which word is, A place of wine-presses. Jesus was accustomed to visit this garden from time to time, so that the disciples were well acquainted with it. On entering the garden, he desired eight of the Apostles to sit down; and he bid them occupy the time in praying that they might not enter into

temptation, while he went to a little distance, telling them that he meant also to engage in prayer. He went away about a stone's throw from them, taking with him the other three apostles ; these were Peter, James, and John. To these he manifested the great distress of his mind, and the oppression of feeling, under which he was labouring. He told them that his soul was under the depth of sorrow, so that he felt it even as the pains of death to him. He bid them remain where they were, and wait for him, and watch in prayer with him : then he went by himself a little way beyond. He knelt down, and from his kneeling posture he presently cast himself upon his face, while he engaged inwardly in earnest prayer. He called upon his Father on high, and asked that if it were possible—if it were consistent with the Almighty will—the terrible burden of those sins which was now overwhelming him might pass from him. He appealed to him by the tenderest term by which a child can address a parent (Rom. viii. 15. Gal. iv. 6)—“ Abba,” he said, “ all things are possible unto thee ; take away this cup from me ;” let the bitterness of the moment to which I am now come, be removed : yet with the perfect obedience of a Son to a Father, and the most entire self-denial and self-devotion, he added, “ Nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt.”

While under this intense agony, he had thus given vent to prayer, one of the angels of God assumed a visible appearance, and in this form came to him to strengthen him ; but in what manner this was effected we are not told. Then Jesus, still in his agony, prayed with increased



earnestness ; and the effort produced so violent an effect in his body, that he was covered with perspiration, which poured forth as though great drops of blood fell from him to the ground.

After this, our Lord rose, and went to the three disciples whom he had left to watch close at hand. He found them all sleeping ; and tenderly reproaching them, he addressed Peter (probably thereby reminding him of his recent self-confidence, see page 115). Was even Simon asleep ? Could they not have continued for a single hour in watchful attention to him ? He repeated his warning to them to be watchful, and to pray that they might not put themselves in the way of temptation. He knew that they were sincerely willing, as far as the spirit was concerned ; but the corrupt nature within them made the flesh to be weak.

Having thus warned the three drowsy disciples ; he again retired to a short distance, and a second time he gave vent to earnest supplication to his Father. The burthen of his distress was not removed ; and the fearful things that were upon him, as he stood charged with the sins of the world, were as terrible to him as before. But his obedience, and his oneness of will with the Father were also equally strong ; and he said, " If this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."

Now again he went to the three disciples ; but the weakness of the flesh had so overcome the willingness of the spirit within them, that they had again fallen asleep. It was late, past midnight, at the end of a day of much excited feeling, and they were very drowsy ; so that when they were in some degree aroused by the second visit of the

Lord, they could not command their minds to answer him properly. He left them in this state ; and, a third time removing to a distance, he prayed again, making use of the words in which he had before expressed himself.

Jesus, who knew all things, knew that the moment for which he had thus been preparing himself by prayer was now close at hand. He went the third time to Peter, James, and John ; and finding them in the state in which he had left them, he spoke to them with surprise ; for the passage, which is given in English as though he said, "Sleep on now, and take your rest," should rather have been translated in the manner of a question, as though he would have said, 'Can you possibly be sleeping the remainder of these few moments ; taking your rest, while I have been suffering the extremity of agony, and had bid you watch with me ? Enough of this :—the moment is arrived, at which the Son of Man is to be betrayed, apprehended, and given up to the Gentiles. Arise from your sleep, and come with me :—the betrayer is near at hand.'

They then joined the other eight disciples, whom they had left near the entrance of the garden. These also he found sleeping : they had been reflecting on the painful circumstances in which their master stood, and the sad things he had told them should happen to him and them, until, wearied with their sorrowful thoughts at that hour of the night, they had fallen asleep. Awaking them, he asked them why they had given way to their drowsiness : he bid them arise and engage, as he had told them, in prayer, that they might not be easily drawn aside into temptation.

## V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

## VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. This scene in the Garden of Gethsemane may be said to be the opening of that great crisis in which Atonement was made for the sins of the world. In immediate contemplation of the hour when the power of darkness should be permitted to have all the effect upon him that sin could give (Luke xxii. 53), the pure mind of Jesus felt the effect of being charged with sin, and of having to bear its consequences. To be able to sympathize fully with the inexpressible agony which Christ now suffered, would require nothing less than the purity of mind that the sinless Jesus possessed. But though, in our present fallen state, none can ever do this ; yet it may be said that no one has arrived at a right understanding of the terrible nature of sin until he has measured it, in some degree, by this suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ on account of it. It was not merely from a knowledge of the numberless acts of evil which men may have done that Jesus sweat, as it were, great drops of blood ; such acts are the outward symptoms, more or less offensive, of a fatal and hateful evil, which is the principle of sin—the absence of a conformity to the will of God—the separation of each man's desires from God to be set upon himself. This principle of sin, existing in every child of Adam, was the oppressive burthen which, when placed to the account of the Lord Jesus, produced the intense agony which is referred to in the present portion. Every one ought to feel that the agony of Jesus in Gethsemane was produced by the sin charged upon him

for each individual sinner; and therefore each ought to feel it to have been for himself.

QUESTIONS.

Do I feel that the agony of Christ in the Garden was produced by the weight of *my* sin?

What are my feelings when I consider this agony? Are they such as make me estimate the hatefulness of sin?

2. Perhaps there is no passage of Scripture in which we have so plain an evidence of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ to men as this; and especially as it is seen in connexion with the entire self-devotion with which he gave himself to the work of man's salvation. What he suffered in standing charged with the sins of men is plainly seen through the expression of his agony; but while he suffered so intensely as to make him almost shrink from the great crisis, yet it was only if it were possible, that he would have avoided it. What made it impossible was, that had he not borne the wrath of God for sin, no child of Adam could have escaped from the eternal consequences of sin: every one who knows the truth of the Gospel may feel, that his soul would have perished had this bitter cup passed from Jesus; and this alternative made the impossibility to the love of Christ. This thought also encreases the power of the example which is placed before us, in the submission and obedience of the Lord Jesus to the will of the Father. "Not my will, but thine be done" has reference to a case, in which the submission included the sacrifice of himself. No suffering to which a christian can be called, can ever equal this agony of the Lord, yet did he submit with all the readiness of an entire obedience. How different is this to the murmurings with which we too often receive those trials from

which we cannot escape, as Christ could have done from his! How often do we make it necessary for God to have recourse to severe chastisements, in order that we may render what is, at best, a forced obedience to his will!

## QUESTIONS.

In what light do I consider the prayer of Jesus in the garden with reference to myself?

In what degree am I grateful for the love towards me, which made it impossible for Jesus to escape the Atonement?

How far can I say that my will is subjected to the will of God?

Do I consent to his chastisements? or do I seek to avoid them by sin?

3. The drowsiness of the disciples in the extraordinary circumstances under which they were placed may perhaps surprise us; but the tenderness of our Lord has explained to us that, though the spirit within them was willing to watch, yet the flesh was weak. Every christian who has endeavoured to exercise a real watchfulness, in obedience to the Lord, has found occasion to apply to himself the truth of this statement. It is however too often the case, that so much allowance is made for the weakness of the flesh, that very little willingness in the spirit is sufficient to satisfy the conscience. The reproach of Jesus to his sleeping disciples ought to affect the heart of those who are so often found off their guard, while attempting to be upon the watch against sin, and to be active in the service of Christ. Could ye not watch with me one hour? this conveyed a compassionate reproof, which ought to reach our hearts with power sufficient to prevent us from making too large allowances for the natural weakness of the flesh; and should arouse us to a constant exertion in the christian warfare.

## QUESTIONS.

Have I been so watchful in my christian course, as to satisfy my conscience that Christ does not come and find me sleeping?

Do I excuse my want of watchfulness on account of the weakness of my human nature?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray that you may have a deeper sense of the sinfulness of sin, and of its hateful nature.

2. Pray for a quicker sense of the love of Christ who bore the consequences of your sins.

3. Pray for a more ready and entire submission to the will of God, under circumstances which make you suffer.

4. Pray to be quickened to a more attentive watchfulness in your christian course.

## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Holy God, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, make me to have the same mind respecting sin which is in thy beloved son, Jesus Christ. Make me more perfectly to understand its exceeding sinfulness, and more entirely to hate its offensive evil. (2) Quicken me to a more lively feeling of the exceeding love of Jesus, in bearing all the agony of standing as a sinner for me, that I might be saved from suffering the eternal condemnation of sin for myself. (3) Teach me, O God, the power of that blessed example which Jesus shewed when it pleased thee to bruise him, and to put him to grief. Whenever thy chastening hand is upon me, or thy providence tries me, enable me to say, "Not my will, but thine be done." (4) May the Spirit of Christ make me ever watchful, that while I am striving to pursue my christian course in the world surrounded by difficulties, I may ever enjoy that holy intercourse with Christ, which may make me watch with him every hour of my whole life, until his voice shall bid me arise, and join him in his glory. AMEN.

## ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVENTH PORTION.

Jesus apprehended.—*Conversation, No. 65. Miracle, No. 40.*

PLACE.—*At the entrance of Gethsemane.*

TIME.—*Evening of Thursday in Passion week—Midnight.—  
The day before his death.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvi. ver. 47 to 56.

St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xiv. ver. 43 to 52.

St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxii. ver. 47 to 53.

St. John's Gospel, chap. xviii. ver. 2 to 11.

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

MATTHEW xxvi. verse

47, &c. staves *means here* strong sticks

51. smote off ..... cut off

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

It will be remembered that Judas had made an agreement with the chief priests to deliver up Jesus to them (Luke xxii. 2—5, Vol. v. p. 304); and that he had left the supper-chamber for the purpose of putting his plan into execution. (John xiii. 27—30. See page 29.) The chief priests and Pharisees, in expectation of the fulfilment of his promise, had arranged for a number of Roman soldiers, under the command of their officers, to accompany Judas, and to do as he might direct them. These soldiers were a part of the guard usually placed by the Governor at the disposal of

the Jewish magistrates, for the purpose of keeping the peace ; and they were joined upon this occasion by a number of the servants of the Pharisees, and other stragglers, who were loitering about at that late hour. These latter had armed themselves with clubs, and other weapons which might chance to be at hand ; and although it was bright moonlight, some of them took lanterns with them, and some torches, thinking probably that Jesus might hide himself ; and that they might have to search for him.

Judas knew where it was likely that Jesus would have gone upon leaving the supper-chamber, as he was accustomed to walk with his disciples in Gethsemane upon other occasions. Therefore the traitor led the whole party of soldiers with the servants and rabble to this garden. They came to the entrance just as our Lord had rejoined the disciples, after his agony and prayer. Being fully aware of every thing which was about to happen to him, Jesus went out of the garden to meet them ; and he asked them at once whom they wanted. They said that they were seeking for Jesus the Nazarene. He told them that he was the person. At this time Judas was standing with the soldiers. The moment our Lord had declared to them who he was, the whole party staggered backwards, and fell to the ground. Upon their rising, Jesus put the same question to them again, asking them whom they were looking for. They answered as before, that they were in search of Jesus the Nazarene. He said he had already informed them that he was the person ; and he requested that if they were only looking for him, they would allow his disciples to



pass free. This he did to fulfil what he had just before said in his prayer to the Father, in the supper-chamber ; " Of them which thou gavest me, I have lost none." (John xvii. 12.)

The Roman soldiers were not acquainted with the person of Jesus ; and although he had acknowledged himself in the manner he had done, they did not proceed to take him, because they had received a particular order from Judas, who had given them a sign by which they were to know whom to arrest. This sign was, that Judas would go up to the individual and give him the salutation of a kiss. The soldiers were desired to apprehend the person he thus saluted ; and with the obedience which was always so strictly required of soldiers, they waited for the appointed signal before they proceeded to act. Judas therefore stepped up to our Lord, and saluting him in a civil way, he kissed him.

If Judas was foolish enough to imagine that he could deceive Jesus as to his motives, our Lord shewed him his error, by saying to him, " Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss." There was no time for more, for the soldiers immediately acted upon their orders ; and seizing hold of Jesus, they made him their prisoner.

When the eleven Apostles saw that Jesus was really taken by the soldiers, and was likely to be carried away to prison, they asked him whether they should make resistance to defend him : and Peter, with the same bold self-confidence which he had already shewn, without waiting for the answer of his Lord, stepped forward, and dealing a blow with his sword, struck one of the men who came with the soldiers—a servant of the high priest,

named Malchus. By this blow he cut off the man's right ear. Jesus interfered at once: he went to Malchus, and touching the wound, his ear was immediately restored. Then turning to Peter, he bid him put his sword into the sheath; for, said he, "all they that take the sword, shall perish by the sword." He put him in mind that these things were appointed by God, and his duty was only to submit. He shewed also how free and willing was his own submission, by telling him that he could at once pray to his Father for help against these enemies, and that immediately whole armies of angels (more than twelve of the largest divisions, called legions) would be at his disposal. But if he took this course, how would all the prophecies and promises of the word of God concerning his sacrifice and atonement be fulfilled.

Having said this to his disciples, he turned and addressed the crowd of people before him, with whom were also the chief priests themselves, the officers of the temple, and the elders, who had followed Judas's party to see what would happen. He asked them why they came to take him up as if he were a robber: why they had not arrested him when he had so often sat in the temple, teaching the crowds of people who came to him. He answered his own question, by telling them that this was the permitted time when they, under the power of Satan, the prince of darkness, might for a short season prevail against him: and that all this had happened that the prophecies of the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

When the eleven Apostles found that Jesus did not make any resistance, but that he allowed himself to be taken as a prisoner, they lost all their

boasted courage; and being alarmed for their own safety, they every one of them forsook him, and ran away. This probably induced some of the soldiers to run after them, who caught hold of a young man that happened to be amongst them at that time. It is believed (according to the statement of some of the early writers) that this person was St. Mark himself, before he was converted, who gives the account of the matter. He had most likely heard, after having gone to bed, the noise of the soldiers and the crowd who were in search of Jesus, and had hastily gone forth, having only time to cast a linen cloth round him. When they found Jesus he had placed himself behind our Lord, amongst the eleven Apostles; and now, when they ran away, he went with them. The soldiers having laid hold of his loose garment (the only covering with which he had come forth) Mark left it in their hands, and thus escaped from them, as did also the eleven Apostles.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures, See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. We have seen in the last portion the deep depression and agony of our Lord when standing under the charge of sin, and taking upon him the blame of it; and in the present portion, we find an account of the calmness, dignity, and self-possession with which he went forth to meet his betrayer, and those who were about to deliver him up to death. This contrast is very striking, and more particularly as it shews us the difference between the feeling of a sense of sin when charged upon the conscience, and the manner of meeting the consequences which result from sin in this

world. Those who have no just notion of the hateful nature of sin are only anxious to avoid its painful consequences, while true christians are much more influenced by the offensiveness of sin secretly upon their own consciences, than they are by the results which follow in this life. Jesus had wept, and cast himself upon the ground in agony at the bitterness of that cup which conveyed to him the guilt of sin ; but he now stood forth with ready and quiet submission to receive its punishment. The sin of which he was bearing both the guilt and the punishment was not his own, but ours; and it is his Spirit which alone enables us to sympathize with his agony in being charged with the guilt of sin, that we may profit by his patient endurance when he suffered its punishment. In this remarkable contrast we may also perceive the effect and strengthening power of that pouring out of heart in spiritual prayer to the Father, which was produced by the sense of sin, and which prepared Jesus for standing calmly under its consequences.

#### QUESTIONS.

Do I think lightly of those sins, which, being kept secret from the world, are not likely to produce any inconvenience to me ?

Which gives me most pain, the thought of God's anger against sin, or the thought of what I may have to suffer for it ?

Has my self-examination been accompanied with confession and prayer ; and what have been the effects of such a course on my outward demeanour and conduct ?

2. The effect produced upon the soldiers and the crowd who came to apprehend Jesus may serve to shew, how entirely it was in his power to escape from their hands if he had desired to do so. By the confession of his name in one single word, Judas and his party were struck to the

ground. He could as easily have struck every one of his enemies dead, had he willed; and what did take place is sufficient to prove that he laid down his life willingly, and that no man took it from him. (John x. 18.) From this we may perceive that his atonement was a free offering for our sins, made of his own mercy; and not in any respect the consequence of circumstances which he could not prevent. The more we contemplate the atonement of the Lord Jesus in this point of view, the more we shall be led to see the exceeding power of his death as a substitute for sinners; and the greatness of his love in making that atonement for them.

## QUESTIONS.

Have I been accustomed to consider the death of Christ as the free-will offering which he made on my behalf?

What effect has this in promoting the love of Christ in my heart?

3. When we see the conduct of Judas in betraying our Lord, and reflect upon the intercourse which he must have had with his Master during the three previous years, we cannot but perceive the hardening effect which double motives and hypocrisy must have upon the heart. Those who resist and reject the Holy Spirit, and carry on a course of conduct upon false motives, become at length so hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, that they are capable of doing such things as it would have shocked them to have thought of at an earlier stage. We cannot but wonder at the boldness of Judas in leading the band of soldiers—in rising up when the word of Jesus had cast them all to the ground—in giving the appointed signal of the kiss: but many poor worldlings, who have at one time professed religion, have shewn how

shamelessly they can betray the Lord, when they have become accustomed to hypocrisy. Surely we ought to be earnest in the use of that prayer in the Litany, "From hardness of heart, good Lord deliver us."

#### QUESTIONS.

What effect has the conduct of Judas upon my mind ? Does it make me tremble at the hardening effect of secret sins ?

Can I look back to the time when I should have been ashamed to do, that which I have since allowed myself to commit ?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for such a conviction of sin as may make you more distressed at its guilt than afraid of its consequences.

2. Pray that the love of Christ towards yourself, manifested in his freely giving himself to death, may produce an enlarged feeling of love towards him in your heart.

3. Pray that you may be preserved from the hardening effect of double motives and sin upon the heart.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) Merciful God, who knowest the secrets of all hearts, and who seest how prone we are to think lightly of sin, send thy spirit into my heart, that I may be of one mind with thee, and hate the very taint of sin which cleaves to my nature, rather than be influenced only by the fear of its consequences. (2) Teach me to know more of the love that Christ has shewn in freely giving his life for my sin ; and enable me to love him because he has first loved me. (3) Keep me sincere and single-hearted ; and preserve me from that great evil, the hardening power of secret sin, that I may grow in grace, and learn more and more to manifest thy glory, by loving that which thou lovest, and turning from that which dishonours the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

## ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHTH PORTION.

Private examination of Jesus.—*Conversation, No. 66.*

PLACE.—*The High Priest's house—Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*About One o'clock, a. m., on the Morning of Friday—  
the day of his death.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvi. v. 57 to 68.  
St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xiv. ver. 53 to 65.  
St. Luke's Gospel, c. xxii. ver. 54, 55, and  
63 to 65. St. John's Gospel, chap. xviii.  
verses 12 to 16, and 19—24.

### III. THE MEANINGS;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

Matthew xxvi. verse

63. adjure thee *means here* call upon you to take  
a solemn oath

67. buffeted him. . . . . slapped him on the face

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

The soldiers and Jewish officers had now taken Jesus as their prisoner; and the first thing they did was to tie his hands behind him, according to the custom upon such occasions. Then they led him away. The person who filled the office of high priest that year was named Caiaphas. He

was the same who, in the council, had given advice upon a former occasion, that it was advisable to put Jesus to death ; but he spoke this in such a manner, that his words conveyed a true prophecy, " that it was expedient that one man should die for the people." (John xi. 49-52 ; xviii. 14.) Caiaphas had married the daughter of Annas, who had himself been high priest, and who at this time was vice-president of the council. (Luke iii. 2. Acts iv. 6.) Probably the house where Annas lived lay in the way from Gethsemane to the high priest's palace, which was near the temple ; for the soldiers took their prisoner first to Annas, who desired them to convey him at once to the high priest's house ; which they accordingly did.

At this time Jesus was unaccompanied by any of his disciples ; they had all forsaken him. Two of them, however, Peter and John, appear to have recovered from their alarm, as soon as they found that the soldiers gave up the pursuit of them ; and they turned back again, and followed the crowd who were carrying Jesus away. When they saw that he was taken into the palace of the high priest, John, who was personally known to Caiaphas, went in also. It was not unusual to have women as porters, or door-keepers, at great people's houses ; and it was a woman who acted in this capacity to the high priest. Whilst Peter remained outside John went to the door-woman, and asked her to allow his companion to come in ; to which she consented, and Peter was admitted accordingly. The servants, finding it cold, had lighted a large pan of charcoal in the middle of the lower division of the hall, (which was the usual



way of warming large rooms in that country) and were seated on the ground round it; and as soon as Peter got within the door, he went to this group of people in the centre of the hall, and sat down on the ground amongst them, as being the most likely place to escape observation.

Jesus was brought before the high priest, who immediately began to ask him such questions as were likely to draw forth something upon which to ground a charge against him. This was a preparatory examination before his trial; and it was probably carried on while steps were being taken for collecting the different members of the council at that unusually early hour of the morning; or more properly speaking in the middle of the night, for it could scarcely have been an hour after midnight. The questions put to Jesus by the high priest related to his disciples, and to what he had taught. Our Lord however said, that he had always taught publicly in the synagogue and in the temple; and referred to those who had heard him teach, bidding Caiaphas to question them as to the nature of his doctrine. When Jesus had made him this answer, one of the officers standing by went up to him, and struck him with his open hand, for what he considered to be want of respect to the high priest. At this time the hands of the prisoner were tied behind him, but he spoke mildly to the man who struck him, asking him why he had done so. If what Jesus had said had been wrong in any way, the officer ought to have represented the case to the high priest, but not to have taken the law into his own hands; specially as what Jesus had said had not been improper, or disrespectful.

The chief prests, elders, and scribes, and all the members of the Sanhedrim, soon came together, to the palace of the high priest, although summoned at so very early an hour. Having all joined Caiaphas, they proceeded to examine such witnesses as they could find, who were ready to swear falsely ; in order to establish some charge against Jesus, for which they might condemn him to death. To be able to pronounce a legal condemnation of death, the law positively required that, at the least, two witnesses should agree in their evidence against the prisoner. (Deut. xvii. 6 ; xix. 15. Numb. xxxv. 30.) But although his enemies had procured a number of persons who were willing to testify falsely against Jesus, yet no two of them agreed in giving the same testimony. At length two men came to be examined, both of whom remembered something of what Jesus had said about three years before, when he begun his ministry in Jerusalem. (John ii. 13—22.) They swore that he had said he would destroy the temple of God, and build it in three days. But when their evidence was sifted by cross-examination, they prevaricated so that the testimony of one did not agree with that of the other.

Jesus had been quite silent, all the while this examination of witnesses had been going on. This astonished the high priest, who rose up and asked him, if he had nothing to say in answer to all that had been sworn against him. Our Lord however remained perfectly silent, in spite of this question from Caiaphas.

The assembled enemies of Jesus now found that they could not bring any legal proof to establish a capital charge against him. They knew how-

ever that he had given himself out to be the Son of God, equal with God (John v. 17, 18; viii. 54—59; x. 30—33); and they determined to endeavour to make him criminate himself, since they could not get witnesses that would suit their purpose. The high priest therefore solemnly adjured him “by the living God,” in the usual way of administering an oath in their courts of justice; and then asked him if he was “the Christ, the Son of God.” Thus called upon by the Judge, Jesus replied that he was: but at the same time he added, that hereafter those people who were now judging him, should see him, as Daniel had foretold, as the Son of Man, “sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven.” (Dan. vii. 13.)

No sooner had Jesus uttered these words, than the high priest tore part of his clothes (which was the customary manner of expressing great grief or indignation); and cried out that Jesus had spoken blasphemy, and that there was no need of further evidence against him, for that the words they themselves had heard him speak, amounted to the crime of blasphemy; which, according to the Jewish law, was to be punished with immediate death. (Lev. xxiv. 16.) He at once put it to the vote, what his sentence should be; and with one accord they every one declared him to be guilty of the crime of blasphemy, and therefore should be condemned to death.

As soon as this had been decided, the guards and servants who kept Jesus prisoner began to insult him, and mock him, for having pretended to be so great a person. Some went up to him and struck him in his defenceless state; others

spit in his face ; others again put something before his eyes, and then striking him, bid him prove himself to be the Christ by telling who it was that had struck him, although he could not see. This led others on to follow their example, so that, one after another, each came forward, and either with a blow or a blasphemous word, reviled and insulted him.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures, See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. When conscience is yet alive, and the heart sincere, though its workings may not be strong enough to overcome a powerful trial, yet it may lead us to make some efforts to do what is right. It was thus with Peter and John ; they had forsaken their Master in his distress, but their hearts were with him ; and they could not help following after him, even at the risk of some danger to themselves. In such cases there is a painful sense of shame, which destroys all confidence and comfort, even with respect to those things which are rightly done ; because we feel that they are but so many proofs, that we know we ought to have done more. How much less painful and difficult is it to bear the utmost consequences of a christian duty conscientiously performed, than to attempt to recover a false step by a weak effort to do something in order to soothe a wounded conscience !

#### QUESTIONS.

Have I done any thing which my conscience tells me is in fact a desertion of my Christian profession ?

Do I think I make up for my past conduct by imperfectly attempting what I ought to have done before more completely?

2. The conduct of Jesus Christ when struck by the high priest's officer, gives us the best explanation of His doctrine in the Sermon on the Mount, concerning the resistance of evil. (Matt. v. 39.) His answer to the officer proves that, when he said to his disciples "whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," he meant, that they must not violently resist a person doing them an injury; but that, if any one receive a blow on one cheek, so far from returning it, he ought rather to turn the other cheek, and bear a second blow, than take upon himself to avenge the first. (Prov. x. 22; xxiv. 29. Rom. xii. 17—19.) We must partake of the Spirit of Christ, before we can rightly understand his doctrine, and patiently apply it in enduring such unjust insults and injuries as our Christian profession may bring upon us.

#### QUESTIONS.

Are any insults or injuries unjustly put upon me? and if so, how do I bear them?

Do I resist them with angry resentment? or do I meet them with quiet and gentle remonstrance?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for ready courage to act consistently, as a Christian, in every difficulty.

2. Pray for patience to bear every injury with Christian temper, and to overcome evil with good.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) God of all power and might, without whom nothing is strong; mercifully be pleased to

strengthen the weakness of my faith, and give me boldness and courage to confess the Name of thy dear Son under every circumstance of difficulty and trial. Grant me grace to act always consistently with what I profess, and at once to follow Jesus whatever loss or distress it may cause me. (2) Give me the Spirit of patience, and make my temper like unto Christ's ; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again. Check every uprising of anger in me against those who injure or offend me ; and enable me, by thy grace, to overcome evil with good. Hear me, O Father, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father &c. .

## ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINTH PORTION.

Peter's denial.

PLACE.—*The High Priest's house—Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*Between one and two o'clock on the morning of Friday,  
the day of his death.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. xxvi. ver. 69 to 75. St. Mark's Gospel, c. xiv. ver. 66 to 72. St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxii. verses 56 to 62. St. John's Gospel, chap. xviii. ver. 17, 18, and 25 to 27.

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

MATTHEW xxvi. verse

73. bewrayeth *means here* discovers

LUKE xxii.

59. affirmed ..... said it was true

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

While our Lord was under examination by the High Priest and the members of the Sanhedrim, other things were happening in the lower part of the great hall where Jesus was. This hall was divided into three parts ; yet so that all were open to each other. First, there was the porch, or entrance. Secondly, there was what may be called the hall itself. And thirdly, at the upper end, there was a large space raised a step above the hall. In the porch, the door-keeper sat. In the

hall itself, all the persons and servants who had come in with Jesus were waiting by the fire which they had made in the middle. In the upper part, the High Priest had received Jesus and questioned him ; and there too the chief priests and elders who formed the council had assembled together, as, one after another, they had come in. It had taken a considerable time, an hour at least, to collect the council, and examine Jesus ; during which much had happened to the Apostle Peter in the hall. When first admitted through the kindness of John, who had asked the door-keeper to let him in, Peter went to the fire, and sat amongst the servants who were round it ; these were talking about what had happened that morning ; and the woman who kept the door, having had occasion to come up to the place where they were, joined in the conversation. Upon seeing Peter, whom she remembered to have let in with John, she asked him whether he was one of Jesus' disciples ? At this question all Peter's fear revived ; and in the confusion between his alarm for himself, and his trembling conscience, he answered, " I do not know or understand what you say ;" but this was only like catching hold of a twig in a fall, his fear overcame, and he added " I am not." His uneasiness and shame however would not let him remain amongst the people, and he got up and went to the porch. As he came there, a cock crew. Jesus had told him the very evening before, that before the cock crew twice, he should three times deny that he knew Him. The voice of this cock ought naturally to have brought the remembrance of this to his mind ; but his thoughts were too much



occupied and confused with alarm and shame at what had just taken place, and the sound went no further than his ear.

There was another woman in the porch, whom the door-keeper had probably left to take her place while she was absent. The door-woman now returned, and both the women together seeing Peter in the porch, remarked to those who were near them, that he was one of those who belonged to Jesus. This took Peter at unawares, while under all the painful effects of his first falsehood; and it made him fall still deeper into sin. In angry haste he uttered an oath, and flatly denied that he knew the man. In this state of mind he left the porch, and returned to the party who were round the fire. The people of Galilee had a particular way of speaking, somewhat different from the people of Judea; just as the Irish and the Scotch talk English, in a way that any Englishman can tell to what country they belong. Peter's talk was that of a Galilean; and as he joined in the conversation, one of them was struck with his accent, and charged him with being one of the Galilean party which followed Jesus. This drew attention to him; and there happened to be a man at the fire who was related to Malchus (that servant of the High Priest whose ear had been cut off, just before Jesus was taken up): this man had been in the garden with his kinsman; and now looking at Peter, he remembered his face, and said, "did not I see thee in the garden with him?" Peter's conscience had had an hour's slumber since he had last fought against it, and was now in a deep sleep. Satan took advantage of this state, and

urged him on to greater sin. With the violent impulse of a man who feels it necessary to make a great effort, as it were, to wind himself up in doing a wicked deed, he went beyond all bounds of decency ; and, cursing and swearing, he declared he knew nothing of the man of whom they spoke.

The words were scarcely out of his lips, when the sound of another cock-crow fell upon his ear. The very violence of his effort, by carrying him to such great lengths, had awakened his conscience ; and now he heard the voice of the cock which before had passed unobserved. It brought with it the remembrance of all that his Master had said—"before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice." Overwhelmed with the thought, he turned his eyes to the upper part of the hall, where the Lord Jesus, his compassionate Master, was standing with his hands tied behind him, just at the moment that the High Priest had put him upon his oath, and he had declared himself to be the Son of God. In the midst of his own trial, Jesus had not forgotten Peter ; and as the cock crew, He turned round and looked upon him. Who can tell the power of that look ! What must have been the feelings of Peter upon receiving it ! It pierced to his very soul. He could not bear that look, it filled him with shame. He thought no more of the servants, nor the guards ; but covering his head with his cloak (which is the meaning of the words in St. Mark's Gospel that are translated "when he thought thereon"), he went out of the hall, and gave vent to his agony in a flood of bitter tears.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II

## VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. Peter's conduct affords one of the most instructive histories ; and must suggest many serious reflections to the mind of every one who has any knowledge of himself. We see in the first place the consequences of that self-confidence, the evil of which has been already pointed out, when our Lord foretold three times over, what his boasting would come to. Therefore " let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall ;" and let each remember, that to be able to follow that line of conduct, under any particular circumstances, which we know beforehand to be the right one, we must depend only upon the grace of God given us at the time, and sought for also at the time : and that the best preparation for a season of trial is not the making of strong resolutions concerning what we will do, but such a sense of our weakness as will lead us to look to Christ alone for help.

## QUESTIONS.

Am I sensible that I need a continual supply of grace to strengthen the weakness of my best intentions ?

Do I depend on God alone for such grace, and ask Him to give it to me at the time I need it ? or have I forgotten to ask when the temptation has come upon me ?

2. We may perceive in Peter's conduct a remarkable proof of the easiness with which the voice of conscience may be stifled. Peter's conscience did not leave him after he had run away when his Master was taken : but it pricked him for this great sin, and made him follow that Master, though afar off as one that is afraid. His first denial of his master shewed plainly that conscience was yet alive, for he could not make up his mind to say no at once, until he had cleared the way for

that direct falsehood, by saying he did not understand what was meant; which however was equally false. This sin had such an effect in confusing his mind, and deadening his conscience, that he did not attend to the first crowing of the cock, which ought to have aroused him by reminding him of his Master's prophecy. He was by this time much in the same state as those persons, who, after knowing the truth, having given themselves up to practices by which their Lord is denied, can sit quietly under the strongest sermons against worldliness, which, like the cock-crow, ought to remind them of what they know to be true; but they fall unheeded on their ears. Conscience thus wounded began to withdraw its influence from Peter, and to leave him open to a stronger attack from Satan, so that his next was a bold falsehood accompanied with an oath. The next step in sin was easy and large; for conscience was overcome and silenced for a time, during which Peter could sit quietly with the enemies of his Lord, and join in their conversation. By this he was prepared for the great fall that followed, when he tried to give strength to his falsehood by curses and oaths. Such too frequently is the case when the followers of Jesus unite with his enemies, without boldly and openly professing themselves to be his disciples. They are led on from sin to sin, until they fall into the worst wickedness of those with whom they unite.

## QUESTIONS.

Do I attend to the first alarms of my conscience when I am sensible of having done something wrong?

Or, do I endeavour to prevent the consequences of the first sin, by turning away from the voice of conscience within me?

3. It often happens that persons who have resisted their consciences, overdo themselves by some excess in sin, which brings back the power of conscience by means of their surprise at their own wickedness. When weak christians have fallen into such a case, God providentially applies some outward warning to assist the return of conscience. Such was the second cock-crow which Peter was this time able to hear ; and such has often been some portion of God's word, or some of God's dealings to his sinful children, who have strayed from him for a season, and found themselves further gone than they could have imagined. In such a case, the difference between a child of God, and one who has given himself up to Satan, is seen in the point to which he looks in his distress. Peter's eye was raised at once to Christ : and to that same Christ will the heart of every one be led under similar circumstances. As our Lord turned and looked upon Peter, so does that compassionate Saviour look upon His weak and sinful people. The look of Jesus was one which left no room in Peter's mind for anything else : it overwhelmed him with shame, and filled him with repentance, shewn by bitter tears. Such shame and such repentance are the bitter fruits which will always be produced by the sins of any of the children of God.

## QUESTIONS.

How have I acted when my conscience has become burthened ? Have I looked to my own exertions and endeavours to remedy the evil ? Or, have I looked to Christ whom I have crucified by sin ?

What effect has been produced in me by considering that Christ looks upon me with compassion, even under sin ?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for grace to depend on God's help alone to strengthen you in every temptation to deny Him.
2. Pray for a lively feeling of conscience, and a ready attention to its suggestions.
3. Pray to be constantly drawn to Christ, when under a sense of sin; and to be awakened, by every providential intimation, to the reality of His observation of you.

## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Gracious God, whose hand is ever stretched out to uphold those who call upon thee, give me thy grace I beseech thee, that I may confidently trust to thee alone to support me in the hour of temptation: keep me from self-confidence; and strengthen me that I fall not into any denial of thee. (2) Quicken my conscience by thy Holy Spirit, that it may not let me commit sin ignorantly; and by the same Spirit make me attentive to its voice, that I may not commit sin presumptuously. (3) Grant that every discovery of sin in myself may make me turn the more earnestly to Christ; and teach me more perfectly to realize His presence ever watching me, and ever calling my attention by providential events. Make me quick in feeling the power of his reproof, that I may live as one convinced of sin, and pardoned by the blood of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

## ONE HUNDRED AND NINETIETH PORTION.

Legal trial and condemnation of Jesus.

PLACE.—*Council-chamber in the Temple—Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*About three o'clock on the morning of Friday, the day of his death.—Year 30.*

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### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. xxvii. ver. 1, 2.

St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xv. ver. 1.

St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxii. ver. 66 to 71.

“ chap. xxiii. verse 1.

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

THE examination of Jesus had occurred without the regular form of law, in the palace of the High Priest. This was not the appointed place for holding the meetings of the Sanhedrim or Council ; there was a chamber in the Temple itself for that purpose. In order then that every thing might be done strictly according to law, the High Priest now proceeded to hold the council in the proper Council-chamber ; to which place they accordingly took their prisoner. There was now no occasion for delay, because they knew upon what ground to proceed ; and instead of attempting to bring any witnesses to prove the charge of blasphemy against him, they began his trial at once in the way which they knew would

succeed. They first asked him whether he was the Christ, the Anointed One, prophesied of in the Scriptures. To this question he replied by exposing the motives which induced them to put it. "If I tell you," he said, "ye will not believe"—neither would they give him an opportunity of convincing them by answering his questions upon the subject, because they were determined not to release him. The time however would come, when they should be convinced after a different manner; when He who then spoke to them, being a man, "should sit at the right hand of the power of God."

As this answer could not so plainly be considered blasphemy as that which he had before given in the palace, they put the question to him again more directly:—"art thou then the Son of God?" To this he plainly answered that he was; upon which the council, having obtained all they wanted, sentenced him to death for this blasphemy, as they called it. The Sanhedrim was the principal Court of Justice among the Jews, before which all great causes, and especially all capital charges were tried. (See Vol. i. p. 246.) The Roman Emperor, who had conquered the nation, allowed them to carry on their own laws and customs as before; only taking from them the power of executing criminals, though he left them the duty of trying them. The Roman magistrate, who was sent to govern in the place of the Emperor, and who had the soldiers under his command, was the person to execute all sentences of death, and who had the prerogative of mercy which belongs to a king. The Sanhedrim having now passed sentence upon Jesus, ordered that he should be immediately



taken, bound as he was, to Pilate the Roman governor, that their sentence might be carried into execution.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

In the care which the Council took that every thing should be done in the execution of Jesus according to law, we see an instance of that cunning, by which the sleeping consciences of wicked men often cheat them. Having hardened themselves in some sinful course, for which they have found a plausible pretence, they are extremely careful to fulfil every tittle which may be necessary to support that pretence in their minds. But in such a state they are not open to conviction ; especially to such conviction as arises from religious truth. There are multitudes of persons who cannot bear the religion of Christ, because it will not sanction their own way of living. These persons will nevertheless look into the Bible, as if they were searching for divine truth ; but whatever they may find in that blessed word will never convince them, so long as they are determined to go on in a course which crucifies the Lord Jesus. There is a time however, when all such persons will acknowledge the truth of what they refuse now to believe—the time when the same Lord Jesus shall come in judgment, “ sitting at the right hand of the power of God.”

#### QUESTIONS.

Is there any point on which I have made up my mind not to alter my course, whatever may be said about its sinfulness, or impropriety ?

Do I consult the Scriptures, merely in order to build myself up in a certain course, or in order to be guided to the course which I ought to pursue ?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray to be preserved from self-willed prejudice in following any course of conduct.

2. Pray to be kept from mistaken confidence in mere regularity of form.

## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O gracious God, who knowest our frame, and rememberest that we are but dust, have compassion, and send thy Holy Spirit to overcome all pride and self-will, that they may not have dominion over me : give me an humble and teachable spirit, that I may never be kept by prejudice from conforming my conduct to thy holy will. (2) Let me not be left in the imagination that correctness of form can make up for error in principle ; but save me from all such courses as are contrary to the spirit of thy holy Word, that I may not seek to build myself up in wrong. I ask this for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

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ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIRST  
PORTION.

Judas's remorse and suicide.

PLACE.—*The Temple, and near Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*Past four o'clock, on the morning of Friday, the day of our Lord's death.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvii. v. 3 to 10.

## III. THE MEANINGS ;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

When Judas found that matters had gone further than he had intended,—that our Lord's trial was carried on to the end,—that sentence of death was passed upon him, and that He was led away to be executed, he was greatly concerned at this unexpected consequence; and this feeling of concern (though very different from a true repentance for the sin which he knowingly had committed), for the moment overcame his covetousness. He went to the chief priests and elders, and met them in the court of the Temple, as they were leaving the Council-chamber. He brought back the thirty pieces of silver to them; and declared that he had done wrong in delivering up to their judgment of death, one who was innocent. The members of the council told him that was his concern, not theirs; and that he must settle that with his own conscience, as he best could. As they would not take back the money from him, he flung it down on the pavement of the Temple, and went away. The chief priests did not know what to do with this money. It was contrary to law to put it into the chest towards the repairs of the Temple (Mark xii. 41), because it was money which had been paid for procuring the death of a person (1 Chron. xxviii. 23): so they consulted together what had best be done in the matter. It happened that, at that time, there was no fitting burying-ground for the burial of such foreigners as happened to die at Jerusalem; and they all agreed that it would be a good thing to take this opportunity of procuring one, with the money which Judas had cast away. Accordingly a piece of ground, where a pottery

had been carried on, was afterwards bought for the purpose. The circumstances however becoming known, the people called that place "the field of blood;" so that it was commonly known by that name upwards of twenty years afterwards, when St. Matthew wrote his Gospel. By this purchase the chief priests fulfilled that part of the prophecy of Zechariah (the name was written *Jeremiah* by mistake in the early copies of St. Matthew's Gospel), where it had been foretold that the thirty pieces of silver, at which the Lord was priced, were "cast to the potter in the house of the Lord." (Zech. xi. 12, 13.)

When Judas left the Temple, he was seized with despair at the thought of what he had done. Upon receiving the money from the chief priests the day before, he had lost no time in employing it to the best advantage. Upon this point we gain additional information from Acts i. 18, 19: he had determined to invest the money in the purchase of a field, near Jerusalem; and had immediately struck the bargain with the owner, although the money may not have been paid. On leaving the Temple he went to the piece of land which he had bought, led there perhaps by disappointed avarice; which, added to the remorse he felt, drove him to despair, from which he had no blessing of divine grace to save him. Under this load of guilt and wretchedness, he could bear his life no longer; and put an end to it for this world, by hanging himself on a tree, in the field he had thought to possess. The rope which he used for the purpose, broke with his weight; and falling down, his body burst, and all his bowels gushed upon the ground. This dreadful circumstance

procured the name of "the field of blood" for that piece of land also.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture, See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. When Judas made his bargain with the chief priests, to take a convenient opportunity of delivering Jesus to them, and had received the money in consequence (Matt. xxvi. 14-16. Luke xxii. 3-6), he probably had no notion that our Lord would suffer himself to be taken and ill-treated. He had often escaped from the violence of the Jews, by making himself unseen, and passing through the midst of them (Luke iv. 28-30. John viii. 59) : and besides, Judas had himself exercised a power over evil spirits, given him by the simple word of Christ ; which must have convinced him, that one who gave such power could have done what he liked to his enemies. (Matt. x. 1, 4. Mark vi. 7, 12, 13.) It was as much the traitor's object to cheat the chief priests, as to betray Jesus ; and most probably, he was anxiously watching the council, to observe when Jesus would make himself unseen, and pass away from them, while they were examining Him. This is the way short-sighted people of the world argue about the conduct of christians, without knowing all the motives that influence them in difficulties, and lead them to bear many things which they might avoid, because they make a conscience of accomplishing the purpose of God concerning them.

#### QUESTIONS.

Do I ever try to gain an advantage which must involve improperly the disadvantage of another ?

In such cases do I think that the sin is lessened, if the disadvantage may be avoided ?

2. The chief priests would not apply the money of Judas to a holy purpose, because it was the price of blood. Who was it that had purchased blood by that money? Upon whom lay the sin of that act, which made the giving of the money unholy? It lay even upon themselves:—it was their own iniquity which had paid that money for the blood of the innocent Jesus: and thus did the remorse of Judas draw forth from the members of the council, a just sentence of condemnation upon themselves; even at the very moment when they had passed the unjust sentence of condemnation upon Jesus. Now this is not uncommonly the case with sinners who are intent upon some one object of wickedness. They will take all possible pains to give an appearance of propriety to their sin: but, with their minds fully occupied upon this one point, some accidental circumstance, not appearing to be immediately connected with it, will throw them off their guard; and they will plainly condemn themselves, without knowing that they do so. In the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, all such self-condemnations shall rise up to witness, against the consciences of those who have continued in sin; and shall leave them wholly without excuse against the final sentence of the Lord.

#### QUESTIONS.

Have I fully considered all the effects which may result from any course of conduct I am pursuing?

Is there any point in which my conscience will not let me carry out the consequences of my conduct?

If there is, may not this point witness that I am wrong in the whole course I am following?

3. The workings of the conscience of Judas shew plainly, that the influence of divine grace is

absolutely necessary to the work of repentance. Judas's repentance was a sorrow for some *consequences* of his conduct, which he had not foreseen. Such too is oftentimes the feeling (but it is *mis-called* repentance) with many who *enjoy* their sins, and would excuse them : in fact their only real cause of grief is, that their sins produce such sad consequences. Every condemned soul, who has continued in sin to the last and died in the enjoyment of their evil desires, will grieve through all eternity with a useless remorse, when suffering the everlasting consequences, which they would not before believe. How different were the bitter tears of Peter, under the compassionate though heart-breaking look of the Saviour, from the bitter despair of Judas, who had cut himself off from even the look of Jesus. Peter's repentance was a gracious grieving for the sinfulness of his sin : Judas's was only a carnal concern for the effect that his wickedness had produced. Peter's shame made him look to Christ : Judas never thought of Christ as a Saviour ; and therefore, having no hope, he plunged at once into the condemnation he had chosen. Peter's grief was a "godly sorrow which worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of:" Judas's grief was "the sorrow of the world, which worketh death." (2 Cor. vii. 10.)

## QUESTIONS.

Of what sort is my sorrow for sin ? Would it lead me to indulge the sin, if it were not for its consequences ?

Do I ever strive how I may reconcile to my conscience the enjoyment of some wrong thing, by preventing its evil effects ?

Does a sense of sin in myself make me to look to Jesus ? Do I think of Him with grief, in having made him suffer to save me ? or with terror, as a Judge to condemn me ?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for such self-denial, and such christian charity, as may prevent you from being tempted to gain an advantage that endangers another.

2. Pray for simplicity of heart and motive, that one part of your conduct may never condemn you for another part of your conduct.

3. Pray for a real hatred of sin, upon the ground of its offending God, and crucifying Christ.

## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O God, who didst give thine only Son to die upon the cross for us miserable sinners, fill my heart with such a true sense of my own undeserving, and with such love to my neighbour, that I may rather deny myself any advantage, than place another in a position of disadvantage and danger. Let no temptation of the Devil, the World, or the Flesh, prevail with me to seek gain by other's loss. (2) Unite my heart to fear thy name. Give me singleness of heart in pursuing good, so that I may not be condemned by my own conscience in any thing. (3) Give me thy Spirit of holiness to make me hate sin, because it is rebellion against thee, and because it brought thy beloved Son to suffer as a sin-offering : and teach me to hate its consequences, as they are offensive to thee, while I am warned by them, and turned thereby from the love of sin. Grant this, for thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.



## ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SECOND PORTION.

Jesus before Pilate in private.—*Conversation, No. 68.*

PLACE.—*Pilate's palace in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*About five o'clock in the morning of Friday, the day of our Lord's death.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY God, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. John's Gospel, chap. xviii. ver. 28 to 40.

### III. THE MEANINGS;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

JOHN xviii. verse

[to the law

28. defiled *means here* made unclean according

30. malefactor ..... an evil-doer

36. from hence ..... formed of worldly things

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

It must have been between four and five o'clock in the morning, when the Sanhedrim pronounced the sentence of death upon the Lord Jesus Christ, officially, in the council-chamber of the temple; and no time was lost in conveying the condemned prisoner from thence to the palace of the Roman governor. The whole party of chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, together with a great crowd of Jews, followed him as far as the place of justice, called the Judgment Hall. This was a large apartment or court, with a raised gallery, adorned with an ornamented pavement at one end of it; and the other end was probably in a great measure open to the street, where there was a large porch. This was a heathen building,

and any Jew who had entered into it, would be ceremonially defiled, or unclean ; and it would have taken some days, together with the offering of certain sacrifices, before he could be considered clean again. No Jew in this state of uncleanness could join in the feast of the passover ; and the consequence was, that when the soldiers led Jesus into the court of the judgment hall, all the Jews remained outside the porch, that they might not be defiled, and thus be hindered from eating the passover, now so close at hand.

It was the custom of the Romans to pay great attention to the prejudices of the people whom they brought under their dominion ; and Pilate condescended to go out into the porch to inquire of the Jews concerning the prisoner they had brought to him. He asked them, what charge they laid against the man.

The chief priests wished, if possible, to avoid stating a definite accusation against Jesus. They were aware that what they had to say, would not involve the notion of moral guilt in the mind of the heathen governor ; and they were probably afraid that he might therefore refuse to sanction his execution. They therefore avoided the question, trying at first to ground their demand for his condemnation, upon the simple fact of their own judgment against him. So they told Pilate, that if Jesus had not been a convicted felon, they would not have given him up to the Roman authorities. Upon this Pilate said, that they had better carry out the operation of their own laws upon him ; and this drew out the additional statement from the Jews—that the crime of which he was convicted, was one which demanded capital

punishment ; but that the Romans had deprived them of the power of life and death, even in the exercise of their own laws : this was reserved for the Roman conquerors alone. Had Jesus been left to the ordinary course of the Jewish law, being condemned for blasphemy, he would have been stoned to death ; but he had already foretold, that he should be delivered to the Gentiles to be crucified (Matt. x. 19) ; and accordingly so it turned out.

As Pilate had obtained no satisfaction from his inquiries of the chief priests, he left them outside the judgment-hall ; and went in again, in order to examine the prisoner who had been brought in by the guards. Pilate called Jesus before him, and at once put a question, which shews that, as governor of the country, he had been made acquainted with the nature of Christ's preaching, so far at least as common report had brought it to his ears. The chief priests had stated no defined charge against the prisoner ; but Pilate's first question to Jesus, in this private examination was to ascertain whether he was "the King of the Jews." Before he answered this question, Jesus asked him whether this inquiry was from himself, and for the information of his own mind ; or whether it had been suggested by others as the charge against him.

Pilate was offended at the supposition that he, a Roman, could himself care about anything relating to the Jewish religion. Was he a Jew, or wishing to become one ? What did he care about such questions ? It was the people of Jerusalem, with the chief priests at their head, who had brought Jesus to him as a prisoner for con-

demnation. He concluded by asking our Lord, what he had been guilty of.

Jesus now replied to Pilate's former question, concerning his claim to be the king of the Jews. He told the governor, that the dominion which he now claimed was not one formed of the things of this present world. If he had been ruler of a kingdom of this world those who served him would act like the followers of other Sovereigns in such circumstances : they would have come forward to struggle in his defence, and to preserve him from being taken prisoner by his enemies, the Jews. Such however, had not been the conduct of his disciples : because the kingdom which He was about to establish, was not one founded upon worldly power. Jesus thus denied the charge of rebellion, which would have been involved in his making himself a king, according to the notions of the Roman governor : yet as he still spoke of his kingdom, Pilate again asked him, whether he was in any sense a king. To this Jesus at once replied in the affirmative. It was true that he was a king and for the purpose of being a king he had been born as man (Luke i. 32, 33. Isa. ix. 6, 7) ; truth was what he had come into the world then to declare, and every friend and lover of truth would attend to his words. Pilate (who was well aware of the great varieties of opinion maintained by celebrated philosophers of his time, each claiming that his own scheme was the true one) had no idea that the poor Jewish prisoner, whom he was examining, could settle the point so much disputed amongst the learned ; and therefore he broke off the conversation abruptly by saying, but " what is truth ?" as though he would

say—"As for the truth before we enter upon that matter, you must first decide what truth is."

Pilate then went back to the Jews who were waiting outside the judgment-hall. Wishing to get rid of the whole business, he thought of a plan by which Jesus might escape, even after the condemnation of the Jewish law. He first told them, that he could not discover any ground for condemning the prisoner they had brought to him—he had no fault to find with him. But without entering into the justice or injustice of the Jewish sentence, there was a simple means of getting over all the difficulties of the case. It was the season of the Passover; and it was the custom of the Roman governors to shew respect to the people's great festival, by granting pardon to one prisoner in the gaol, and setting him free. Pilate suggested, that the man whose crime was the calling himself king of the Jews, should have the benefit of this popular privilege. Would they then choose to have Jesus released, in fulfilment of this custom? In answer to this, there was a general cry from the people that they would not have him released, but Barabbas. This Barabbas was a wretched criminal then lying under sentence for robbery, and other crimes.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture. See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. What an illustration we have here of the truth of our Lord's reproof to the Scribes and Pharisees as blind guides who would "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." (Matt. xxiii. 24.) They were doing a great act of wickedness; in seeking the death of the innocent Jesus, and grati-

fyng the malice of their hearts by that act of blood : yet would they not bring upon themselves a ceremonial defilement by stepping within a heathen house. Many, who can perceive the inconsistency of this conduct, nevertheless pursue a similar course : they will live in a state of enmity against some person who has offended them, or indulge in other ways the bad passions of their hearts ; while they would not for any thing omit some habitual ceremony, to the performance of which they have attached the notion of religion. Such persons may justly be classed among those who “ have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.”

#### QUESTIONS.

Is there any secret sin which I refuse to decide in my mind to be wrong, because I do not mean to give it up ?

Have I any unforgiving enmity to a particular person ?

Am I nevertheless regular in my attention to religious observances, and consider such attention a necessary mark of my being religious ?

2. In this conversation with Pilate, our Lord shewed how he modifies his teaching, according to the motives from which inquiry springs. If Pilate had been seeking knowledge for his own sake he would have received more instruction, than he did when merely desiring to judge of the opinions which others had stated concerning Christ. And so it is that the Spirit of Christ works now : a candid inquirer, who sincerely desires personal edification, and searches the Scriptures from that motive, will find that to him “ it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven ;” while “ it is not given” to others, who read only for the decision of controverted points, in which one party charges another with teaching error. In

order to find the power of truth in the word of God, the mind must be free from the infidel notion, that there is no means of deciding "what is truth." The common inference—that, because many people maintain varying doctrines as true with equal zeal, therefore there is no possibility of deciding what truth really is,—is drawn from false reasoning; it in fact denies that there is any divine revelation. Jesus is "the truth;" and "every one who is of the truth" hears His voice in the Scriptures, speaking by the Holy Spirit to the heart, through those Scriptures.

## QUESTIONS.

What is my object in reading the Bible? Is it to obtain knowledge, with which to decide points of discussion amongst men? or is it to settle my own faith, and influence my own practice?

Do I consider that it is in vain to attempt to decide what is the truth on religious points? or do I search for Christ's truth, as revealed in the Scriptures?

3. The clever device of Pilate seemed to him to reconcile all the difficulties in this difficult case; and that too, without compromising either his own conscience, or his influence with the Jews. His conscience told him, it would be wrong to put an innocent man to death; but the chief among the Jews were clamorous for the execution of the law. The act of clemency and kindness which he proposed, would (he thought) satisfy the Jews, and his conscience too. But this did not turn out to be successful; and in no manœuvre, which compromises justice and truth, have we any right to expect success. Even if Jesus had thus escaped, Pilate would have consented to his condemnation, directly contrary to the convictions of his own mind, and so would, in the sight of God, have been guilty of his death. The courage which enables a man to act according to his conscience, without fearing the consequences, sets him also above the consequences, whatever they may be.

"Not this man, but Barabbas," cried the Jews. What an awful choice! Their hatred to Christ made them unfit to judge of the wonderful contrast between the meek and lowly Jesus,

and the murderer Barabbas. Such is ever the way of the world : what comparison can there be between those ways of pleasantness and paths of peace, into which the faith of Christ would lead men, and the broad road of sin which lies through this world and its best enjoyments ; yet how many practically cry out, " not this man, but Barabbas "—not religion, but the world.

#### QUESTIONS.

Is there any point upon which I am endeavouring to quiet my conscience, by seeking the end through other means than those which are the right ones ?

Am I afraid of the consequences which may follow from acting according to my conscience ?

If so, do I act according to my fears, or to my conscience ?

Have I decided to make my choice between Christ and the world ? Which have I chosen ?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray to be cleansed from all secret sins, that the worship of your heart may be sincere and effectual.

2. Pray to be kept in a single-hearted desire to know what truth is, in order to believe.

3. Pray for courage to act according to your conscience, without fear of the consequences.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit ; that I may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Christ our Lord. (2) Give me thy Holy Spirit to convince me of the certainty of thy revealed Word ; and guide me into all truth, that is needful for settling and establishing me in the faith. Give me a single eye, and an humble heart, in seeking to know thy word, with a view to believing it. (3) Strengthen me by thy grace to follow the way of truth, under the guidance of a conscience taught and enlightened by thy Spirit ; and let me feel the fear of offending thee above all other fear, that I may ever live to the glory of the Lord Jesus now, and be glorified with him at his coming. Amen.

Our Father, &c.



## ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-THIRD PORTION.

Presentation of Jesus to the people.—*Conversation, No. 69.*

PLACE.—*Pilate's palace in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*About six o'clock in the morning of Friday, the day of our Lord's death.—Year 30.*

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### I. BEGINNING PRAYER:

MAY God, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. John's Gospel, chap. xix. ver. 1 to 12.

### III. THE MEANINGS;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

When the Roman governor found that his proposal for the release of Jesus, under the customary privilege at the Passover, was rejected by the Jews, he endeavoured to obtain the same object in another way. In order to quiet the people, he determined to inflict some degree of punishment upon the prisoner; by which he hoped their feelings of anger would be so far gratified, that an opportunity might be afforded for the exercise of cooler judgment, and perhaps also compassion might be excited in those who were less strongly influenced by the chief priests. With this view Pilate went in again into the hall of his Palace, and commanded that Jesus should be scourged. For this purpose he was delivered to the company of soldiers which kept guard at the palace; and

from them he underwent the severe punishment of scourging, his bare back being exposed to the lash. When they had given him the appointed number of stripes, they indulged themselves in rude mockery respecting his claim to be a king ; which (they understood) was the offence for which he had been condemned by the chief priests. To heathen soldiers, whose notions of kingly power were drawn from Roman customs, and from the pomp and power of Roman governors, it was doubtless a matter of ridicule and contempt, to find the lowly and despised Jesus claiming to be a king : after scourging him therefore, instead of giving him at once his own garments, they gave vent to their feelings of scorn, by dressing him out in such a manner as mocked the appearance of royal persons. They got some twigs of thorns, and twisting them together into a circle, they put it upon his head, in imitation of the crown which kings wear ; besides this, they put upon him a robe of the purple colour which distinguished the clothing of royal persons ; and having thus decked the patient Jesus, they paid him the outward marks of respect usually given to kings, saying, " Hail, king of the Jews : " but they shewed the hard-hearted ridicule with which they were treating him, by adding blows with their hands, to the mockery with their tongues.

While Jesus was in this condition, the governor desired him to be led to the front of the palace, where the Jews were still waiting. Pilate first went out to them again, and told them that he was about to bring forth the prisoner to them ; protesting that he found no fault with him. Jesus then appeared before the crowd in the state in

which the Roman soldiers had mocked him, with the purple robe upon him, and the crown of thorns upon his head. As soon as he came forth, Pilate presented him to the people, saying, "behold the man:" but the sight of him was the signal for an outcry against him, raised by the chief priests and the official persons, who had brought him to the governor; "Crucify him, crucify him," rang from the crowd. Pilate told them that, if they wanted him to be crucified, they must do it themselves; for that he could not condemn a man in whom he found no cause of blame. The chief priests had not yet fully stated to Pilate the cause of their condemnation of Jesus: they had at first endeavoured to obtain a sentence of death from the governor, by saying generally that he was a person convicted of a capital crime; and after that, they had stated his offence to be the claiming to be the king of the Jews. Finding however that Pilate refused his warrant of execution upon these grounds, they now went one step further, and explained to him that there was a particular law amongst the Jews, by which the punishment of Jesus could be nothing less than death, for that he had declared himself to be "the Son of God." This information awakened a new thought in the mind of Pilate, and one which much increased the alarm that he already felt at the thought of condemning him to death. He therefore wished to question this extraordinary person still further; and for that purpose he retired again to the inner hall of the palace, and desired Jesus to be brought in likewise.

The statement of the Jews, concerning the claim which the prisoner had made to be consi-

dered as the Son of God, alarmed the heathen governor. Superstition is a necessary part of the character of an idolater ; and even the habit of living amongst idolaters, and consenting to their worship, without a real belief in it, must increase superstitious feelings. A person whose mind is accustomed to the notion of many powerful beings called gods, must be more impressed with fear of one who calls himself the son of a god, than if he believed in the true Almighty God. The notion of a man being the Son of this one great God is a thought so vast, that the unassisted mind cannot bring it near enough to create alarm. When therefore Pilate heard the claim to divinity that Jesus made, he must have had feelings of fear, such as never entered into the hearts of the unbelieving Jews. He had been uneasy at the thought of this extraordinary person calling himself the king of the Jews ; but when he heard of His claiming to be the Son of a God, he was the more afraid.

Under these impressions, he went back into the judgment-hall ; and the soldiers also brought in Jesus again to his presence. Pilate asked him, from whence he came ? but Jesus remained silent : upon which the governor spoke to him rebukingly ; “ Did he, a prisoner, refuse to speak to the ruler of the country ? Was he not aware that he stood before the person, upon whose word depended the sentence, either to deliver him to execution upon the cross, or to set him free ? To this our Lord replied, that the governor would have no power at all to hurt Him, unless that power were permitted to him from heaven. He stood before him, therefore, in the position of a

criminal, by the ordering of God's providence ; and however sinful might be his judging and condemning him to death unjustly, upon false principles, yet those who had brought the charge against him, and delivered him to the governor, were far more guilty.

This remark of our Lord's seems to have soothed Pilate : for he was confirmed by it, in the desire to set Him free ; which he endeavoured to do from that time. With this view, he went out again to the front of the palace, and spoke to the Jews. But his delay in passing the sentence they required had set them upon finding and urging the motives most likely to influence him against the prisoner. Accordingly, the crowd around the door shouted out to him that, if he let Jesus escape, he would be acting disloyally to the Roman emperor ; for that whoever set himself up to be king, was guilty of treason against the reigning Cæsar.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. The picture here placed before our minds is a lively representation of the history of Christ's gospel. The eternal Son of God made man—a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ;—the king of the whole world—mocked and derided for his claim, yet clothed in the garments of royalty ; and bearing patiently the mockery and derision. Such was Jesus at this moment ; delivered to Pagans only for scourging—presented to nominal believers as the true God, but rejected, because His claim offended their proud minds. The little flock of true believers, holding up the standard

of the pure gospel, may be seen in a similar position from that day to this. Declaring the sovereignty of Jesus, their proclamation has been laughed at and despised, by those who measure His kingly power according to the notions of men, Despised by the heathen, and rejected by the proud formalist, still have the ministers of the gospel continued preaching Jesus, and saying to all, "behold the man:" and still has that Jesus manifested himself in His people as the patient sufferer, crowned, though it be with thorns—clothed with purple, though to be laughed at; and the time will come, when Christ's true power shall be manifested; and when his having worn that crown of thorns will be the brightest jewel in His crown of glory.

#### QUESTIONS.

Have I ever been amongst those, who treat religious things with lightness or mockery?

Or have I beheld the man Jesus as the Saviour of the world, who will come in glory to destroy his enemies, and to rule as a king,

2. The words which the Jews answered Pilate upon this occasion may be applied as conveying the same thoughts with those openly professed by Socinians, that is, persons who deny the Godhead of our Lord: except that the Jews were more reasonably consistent than the Socinians are. The Jews said, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." "We have a law of our understanding," say the Socinians, "by which we cannot acknowledge a man to be the Son of God:" but they forget that it may also be said, a man "ought to die" for attempting to "make himself the Son of

God;" and that, in proper consistency, their notions would justify the Jews in their conduct to Jesus; and would make Him to be an immoral imposter. Those who hold such opinions concerning the Saviour do indeed "crucify him."

## QUESTIONS.

Do I humble my mind to receive the mystery of Christ's divinity?

Or, do I practically acquit the Jews of blame in condemning Jesus, by withholding from him the honour due to the Son of God?

3. The wisdom and patience of Jesus shone forth in his private conversation with Pilate. He did not aggravate Pilate's feelings, nor take such advantage of his fears, as might be calculated to confirm him in a false impression. By dignified silence in the first place, and afterwards by making just allowances for the governor's situation, He conciliated his feelings, and confirmed his good intentions, without sanctioning his erroneous motives.

But in doing this, He stated the important doctrine of providential permission of evil. No persecutor could have any power at all against a christian, if it were not given him from above. God says that He numbers the very hairs of the head of His people (Matt. x. 30); and He speaks with awful threatening against their opposers. (Matt. xviii. 16. Luke xvii. 1, 2.) But since trial and trouble are the most effective means of purifying His children, and fitting them for His eternal glory, He allows the wicked to have their way up to a certain point; putting the restraint only just when the persecution would be too powerful for the christian. (Job. i. 12; ii. 6.) There are also great distinctions in the degrees of guilt;

between those, who are acting under the force of a current of circumstances already set in motion, into which many streams of various principles flow to strengthen its impulse; and those, in whose hearts maliciously opposed to divine truth, the occasion of persecution or opposition was first imagined, and the impulse first given.

#### QUESTIONS.

How have I acted in cases of personal difficulty, where patience and wisdom have been required? has it been after the example of Jesus?

What confidence do I feel in the overruling Providence of God, at the time when danger seems likely to come upon me?

4. We see here an instance of the cunning with which the motives and conduct of christians may be represented, so as to lead to false results. It was true, that Jesus claimed to be the king of the Jews: but, as He himself told Pilate, His kingdom is not one which interferes with loyal submission to the powers that be; but on the contrary, promotes it. He had especially charged the Jews, to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, at the same time that He required them, to give to God the things that are God's. (Luke xx. 25.) Yet did the Jews urge upon Pilate an argument, which was true in the sense in which he would understand it; though it was not true, that it could be justly applied to the case of Jesus.

#### QUESTIONS.

In what cases have I ever attempted to state truth in a manner that may seem to cast shame on some one who does not really deserve it?

Am I now sensible of the sinfulness of such a course? and do I humble myself before the Son of God for it?

### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for a serious sense of the wickedness of treating with lightness anything connected with the sufferings of Jesus for sin:



and for grace to honor Him in your heart and conduct as you honor God the Father.

2. Pray for a spirit of faithful confidence in the Providence of God over his people ; and for patience and wisdom to exercise that confidence in times of personal danger.

3. Pray for a lively conscience respecting truth ; that you may never employ true statements in a false manner.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O holy, gracious, and glorious God, give me, I implore thee, a just sense of thy greatness and majesty, and especially of thy wonderful love in giving thy Son to be a man, and to die for our sins ; may I be so affected by this love, that I may never be able to join in the wickedness of those who speak of this wonder with lightness, and treat it with contempt. Give me thy grace, that I may perceive the divine glory in the humiliation of the Lord Jesus, and may ever give him due honor as thy eternal Son. (2) Give me such faith in the promises of thy word, that I may fully depend upon thy providential care ; and knowing that all things shall work together for good to them that love thee, enable me to love thee more ; and in all dangers and difficulties to remember that there can be no power against me, but that which is permitted by thee. (3) Quicken my conscience to feel the value of truth, and to speak at all times as knowing that thou hearest ; so that I may never be tempted to deceive others by the use of what I may truly state, but may be open and honest in all my conversation, to the glory of thy name, whose I am, and whom I desire to serve, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

## ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FOURTH PORTION.

Pilate on the judgment-seat.

PLACE.—*Pilate's palace in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*After six o'clock on the morning of Friday, the day of our Lord's death.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. John's Gospel, chap. xix. ver. 13, 14.  
St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. xxvii. ver. 11 to 14.  
St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xv. verses 2 to 5. St.  
Luke's Gospel, chap. xxiii. ver. 2 to 7.

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

Luke xxiii. verse

2. perverting *means here* turning wrong  
to give tribute . . . . . to pay taxes
7. jurisdiction . . . . . rule and government

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

Pilate had gone forth the last time to the Jews in the front of his palace, with a strong desire and resolution to get Jesus released. Up to that moment he was acting under a superstitious fear, and with what might be called a religious motive, according to his notion of a God. But the distinct charge made by the Jews, that to let Jesus escape would be to shew want of loyalty to his master the Emperor, introduced into his mind another fear, grounded upon motives of his own personal safety ; and this fear speedily overcame that other

which had arisen from the faint workings of conscientious motives. All his kind intentions toward the prisoner were now gone : for he would have been in danger of losing his high station; and perhaps his life, if the Jews had accused him before the Emperor of encouraging treason. He therefore determined at once to enter upon the case of Jesus, judicially, in the public court, as that of a malefactor brought before him officially by the Jews. The place where the Roman judges used to hear causes was commonly a bench, or seat, fixed upon a raised floor in some public place. The raised floor was paved with an ornamental kind of tile, from which circumstance the place itself was called by the Romans "the pavement : " while the Jews, when they talked of it in their language, gave it a name which described the raised position of the floor, calling it " Gabbatha ; " which in Hebrew means " the elevated." To this place Pilate now went, and had Jesus brought before him in public trial. The time of this event is marked by St. John, who, calculating in the more modern way, tells us that it was at six o'clock in the morning of the day before the great feast of the Passover—that is, the Friday in Passion-week.

As soon as our Lord was thus brought to a public trial before the governor, his accusers brought their charge against Him. This was cunningly arranged, so as to appear a political offence. He was charged with " perverting the people," and inducing them not to pay the taxes to the Roman Emperor. And then followed the real offence, for which they had condemned him in the Sanhedrim ; but which was so stated, that to

upon him, until he was afraid of the consequences of being thought "not Cæsar's friend:" but this fear overcame the impression at once. The same effect is sure to be produced, whenever the religion of mere nominal christians is put to the same test. Nothing but a higher power overcoming the natural self-worship of the human heart—nothing but the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of Christ, "working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure"—will ever make the principle of religion really triumph in the giving up of personal interest for the furtherance of truth to the glory of God.

#### QUESTIONS.

What is the source of my scruples to commit any particular evil? is it a superstitious alarm of offending an unknown God?

Or, is it the reasonable fear of Him who has shewn his hatred of sin by giving his Son to die for sinners?

Do I pray for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, in order to make me renounce self-interest and seek the glory of God before my own worldly advantage?

2. How affecting is the calm silence, with which our Lord met all his provocations!—"As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." Pilate was surprised at this: and perhaps there are few things which so much puzzle worldly unconverted minds, conscious of the boiling agitations to which their own hearts are liable under offence, as the patient forbearance when, under injustice, aggravation and insult, which a true disciple of Christ is enabled to shew, in that spirit of love which "is not easily provoked."

#### QUESTIONS.

How do I bear what I may have to suffer from unkindness or injustice?

Am I "easily provoked" by them? or do I calmly defend myself against them?

3. The worldly policy of Pilate appears in this transaction in two points of view. While he felt himself forced to yield to the desire of the Jews, rather than be accused of treason at Rome, yet he was very glad to have an opportunity of shifting off the responsibility of the act upon other shoulders than his own. And then besides this, he would consider it a fortunate occasion of overcoming some ill-will which Herod bore him. These advantages smooth over in his mind the fearful injustice which he was committing. He was so fully convinced that Jesus was an innocent man, that his conscience shrunk from pronouncing sentence of condemnation himself: but he did not care for the innocent person's life, so long as it was another who took it away, and he had no objection thus to reap a personal advantage himself from this gross injustice. Worldly policy is ever of a similar character; the principles of selfishness and injustice may be always traced in it. To keep one's self out of a scrape, and to profit as much as possible by circumstances, is the great aim of worldly wisdom; which places the good of self, before the fulfilment of justice to others.

## QUESTIONS.

What is the motive from which I have been at any time induced to help others out of difficulty?

How far has it arisen from a desire to escape from difficulty myself? and how far have I been careless of another's interests, so long as I could increase the safety of my own?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray to have such spiritual motives for your conduct, as may keep you from superstition, and enable you to seek the glory of God before your own worldly advantage.

2. Pray for more of the spirit of love, which "is not easily provoked."

3. Pray to be preserved from selfishness ; and to be able to defend the rights of another, as if they were your own.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O God, give me thy Holy Spirit to enlighten my mind, and influence my heart, so that I may know thee, and be preserved from all false notions and superstitious alarms in striving to obey thee : keep me from the folly of valuing my own worldly advantage before the promotion of thy glory.

(2) Bless me with a larger gift of the Holy Spirit of love ; that I may not be easily provoked, but may calmly suffer whatever may be permitted to try me ; and that I may follow the example of thy blessed Son, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again. (3) Preserve me from the power and dominion of selfishness ; and enable me to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with them that weep, so that by bearing the burthens of others as my own, I may fulfil the law of Christ, my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

# ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIFTH PORTION.

Jesus before Herod.

PLACE.—*Pilate's palace in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*About seven o'clock in the morning of Friday, the 5th of April.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN:

## II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxiii.; ver. 8—12:

## III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion:

Luke xxiii. verse

- |                |                   |              |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 10. vehemently | <i>means here</i> | very angrily |
| 11. arrayed    | .....             | dressed      |
| gorgeous       | .....             | rich         |
| 12. at enmity  | .....             | quarrelling  |

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

Our Lord was led away from the Roman court; and taken before Herod; who was delighted to see him, when he was informed that the person thus sent to him was Jesus of Nazareth; whose name had been so famous in the country for some time past. He had a great curiosity to see a person of whom such extraordinary things had been reported to him, and he was rejoiced at this opportunity; specially with the hope that Jesus would take the occasion of performing some miracle, such as those of which he had heard so much.

As soon as the prisoner was brought before him, he began to ask him a great many questions, to which Jesus made no reply whatever, even

though the leaders of the Jews, who had come with him to state their charges, spoke violently against him, putting forth such complaints and accusations as they had already laid before Pilate. When Herod found this, he was greatly disappointed ; and his high expectations gave way to contempt, which vented itself by mockery and insult, in which his officers and guards very readily joined. Jesus's high pretension, and his claim to be a king, seemed so absurd to them, when compared with his low appearance, and his destitute condition, that in order to ridicule him, Herod commanded that he should be dressed up in a fine and rich cloak ; and in that condition should be taken back to Pilate.

Herod and Pilate had been at variance for some time, in consequence (as has been supposed) of Pilate's interference with Herod's authority, by the execution of some Galileans who had come to Jerusalem to worship in the temple ; (the report of this business had been publicly brought to our Lord in the early part of his last journey towards Jerusalem. Luke xiii. 1.) Whatever was the cause of their quarrel, Pilate's sending the prisoner to Herod was received by him as a proper acknowledgment of his authority ; and his sending him back to Pilate was an evidence that any offence was passed over. Whether this be the real state of the case or not, the quarrel which had existed between these two governors was made up, upon the occasion of what occurred concerning this prisoner ; and a reconciliation took place.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture, See No. II.



## VI. THE APPLICATION.

The worldly policy of Pilate appears in this transaction in two points of view. While he felt himself forced to yield to the desire of the Jews, rather than be accused of treason at Rome, yet he was very glad to have an opportunity of shifting off the responsibility of the act upon other shoulders than his own. And besides this, he would consider it a fortunate occasion of overcoming the ill-will which Herod bore him. These advantages smoothed over in his mind the fearful injustice which he was committing. He was so fully convinced that Jesus was an innocent man, that his conscience shrunk from pronouncing sentence of condemnation himself: but he did not care for the innocent person's life, so long as it was another who condemned him; and then he had no objection to reap a personal advantage from the mode of helping on this gross injustice. Worldly policy is ever of a similar character, the principles of selfishness and injustice may be always traced in it. To keep one's self out of a scrape, and to profit as much as possible by circumstances, is the great aim of worldly wisdom; which places the good of self, before the fulfilment of justice to others. And verily, worldly men have their reward, such as it is. Pilate and Herod were made friends; but it was not with that love which is greater than faith and hope, because it never faileth, even in eternity. The souls of these two men are not friends together now: for there is no love in the outer darkness, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Pilate and Herod are, in this matter, a type of the many instances in which worldly

men have consented to lay aside, for a time, their differences and enmities, while they are engaged in united opposition to the followers of Him whom these two men were consigning to death; sealing the covenant of their reconciliation with his blood.

#### QUESTIONS.

Do I consider it to be fair to take advantage of an evil I cannot prevent?

Have I at any time avoided a sin myself, by getting others to do it?

In what way do I seek a reconciliation with those at variance with me? Is it upon the christian principle of forgiveness and forbearance? or is it because of a common ground on which I may join in opposing religion?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for single-mindedness; that you may be as anxious to prevent sin in others, as you are to avoid it yourself.

2. Pray for grace to avoid all compromise of principle while maintaining the friendship of those amongst whom you live.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O gracious God, who hatest all sin, and hast manifested thy hatred to sin by that great work which shews thy love to sinners in Christ Jesus, give me, I implore thee, such a singleness of heart in striving to be of one mind with thee, that by the power of the Holy Spirit, I may strive to prevent sin in others, even as I would overcome it in myself. Let me not consider myself free from the blame of those sins of which I only avoid the act, by getting others to do it. (2) Bless me with such single-mindedness, and such grace, as may keep me from compromising thy truth for the purpose of standing well with men; and let me never purchase the favour and friendship of men, by either openly or silently denying thee. Hear me, O God, and answer me, for Christ's sake, the Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

# ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SIXTH PORTION.

Jesus sentenced by Pilate,

PLACE.—*Pilate's palace in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*After seven o'clock on the morning of Friday, the 5th of April.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER,

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it, AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvii, ver. 15 to 26. St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xv. verses 6 to 15, St. Luke's Gospel, c. xxiii. v. 13 to 25. St. John's Gospel, c. xix. part of ver. 14 to part of ver. 16,

## III. THE MEANINGS;

Matthew xxvii. verse

16. notable *means here* famous

21. twain ..... two

24. tumult ..... riot

Mark xv. verse

7. insurrection ..... rising of the mob

Luke xxiii. verse

14. perverteth ..... misleads

19. sedition ..... plotting to rebel

23. instant ..... very earnest

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

When Jesus was brought back to Pilate, he again took his seat as a judge in "the Pavement"; and having called together the chief priests and heads of the Jewish people he addressed them, stating that they had brought the prisoner before him as a disturber of the public peace, and one who excited the people to rebellion. Now he had

examined him in open court, and could gather no proof to satisfy his mind that he was guilty of the things with which he was charged. It appeared also that Herod was of the same opinion with himself; for, having sent him to that prince, no punishment had been awarded to him. Pilate therefore proposed that he should order him to be scourged again; and that the Jews should be satisfied with that lesser punishment; and then that he should be released as the prisoner annually selected for a free pardon, in favour to the Jews, at the feast of the Passover. The privilege, however, thus granted to the Jews by the Roman government, involved that the selection should be made by the people themselves; and this part of their accustomed privilege they now proceeded tumultuously to claim. They had already fixed upon a prisoner, then confined in the public jail, and probably intended for execution at that very time. He was an infamous man, named Barabbas; who had really been guilty of the very crime with which they were falsely charging Jesus—that of stirring up the people to rebellion; and in the troubles which had been the consequence of his sedition, Barabbas had committed murder. This was the person whom the Jews selected for the benefit of the free pardon; passing by those who had committed any of the lesser offences, of whom no doubt there were many. At all events, they might have chosen one of the two thieves who afterwards suffered with our Lord.

The crowd of Jews standing round the open part of the Pavement, readily took up the word suggested by the Scribes and Pharisees; and cried out to Pilate to give them the accustomed

privilege :—Barabbas ! Barabbas !—let Barabbas be sent for, was the yell amongst the people. On the other hand, Pilate presented the innocent Jesus before them, saying,—“ Behold your king !” This produced a general cry amongst the people —“ Away with him, away with him ; let him be crucified”—down with him—death to him. Pilate asked whether he should crucify the man who claimed to be their king ? Upon which the chief priests took up the word from the people, and declared, in their name, that they owned no king but the Roman Emperor. The governor was well aware that it was nothing but the envy of the chief priests which had influenced the people to condemn Jesus and to call for his execution. He therefore contrasted the innocent Jesus with the infamous Barabbas ; calling the former by their popular name of the Messiah :—which would they choose to be set free ? Jesus, who was called the Messiah, or Barabbas, the traitor and murderer ?

Many circumstances were made to concur in impressing Pilate with the conviction that Jesus was an innocent man. When he had sat down upon the judgment-seat, a message came to him from his wife, who sent to entreat him not, in any way, to mix himself up with the opposition against Jesus, whom she called “ that just one.” The reason she gave for this was, that in her sleep that very morning, she had been much troubled by a dream concerning him ; which, to the superstitious mind of a heathen, must have been a very great cause of alarm.

While Pilate was receiving this message from his wife, the chief priests and elders of the people were doing all they could to influence the crowd

to claim the release of Barabbas, the rebel and the murderer, rather than that of the innocent Jesus : so that when Pilate had heard the warning of his wife, his ears were at once accosted with shouts of, "Away with this fellow Jesus—give us Barabbas ;—let Barabbas be set free."

Under the impression just confirmed by his wife's dream, Pilate was still more desirous to allow Jesus to escape ; and therefore, without paying attention to their tumultuous cries, he repeated openly the question he had already put, which of the two prisoners he had named would the people desire to have released ; he was answered by their shouting out the name of Barabbas. Though their choice had been thus distinctly made, Pilate was still unsatisfied ; and asked publicly what then was to be done with Jesus, called both the Messiah, and the King of the Jews ; at this the whole people shouted out, "Crucify him—crucify him." But the governor appealed yet a third time, and asked the people why capital punishment was to be awarded to this man ? What had been his crime ? As far as Pilate saw, he had committed no crime at all ; at least, none that could reasonably be considered deserving of death ; he, therefore, proposed to inflict some lesser punishment upon him, and then to set him free, as the prisoner released at the Passover. These words of the governor set the whole people in an uproar ; and the crowd rent the air with loud and earnest cries of "Crucify him—crucify him."

The cries of the people prevailed over the conscience and the superstition of Pilate ; while still the lingering voice within seemed to claim some apology for the sin he knew he was commit-

ting. It appeared evident to the governor that his opposition to the will of the people was exciting them to a tumultuous riot ; and with this set-off in his mind against the injustice of the act he was about to commit, he further quieted his conscience by a public protest against the very act which he, and he alone, had the supreme power to command. He ordered some water to be brought ; and, according to the symbolical habits of the time and nation, he washed his hands in it before the people, declaring as he did so, that it was to signify that he protested he was clean from the guilt of having shed the blood of this person, whom he acknowledged to be innocent of any thing which could call for capital punishment. Thus washing this guilt from himself, he charged it upon the Jews, and bid them see to it. The whole multitude cried out in answer to this, taking upon themselves and their future generations the responsibility of the death, and its results—" His blood be upon us, and upon our children."

This awful scene having taken place, Pilate proceeded to finish the matter, by satisfying the clamour of the people, and pronouncing the judicial sentence of death upon Jesus.

The sentence had passed, and it remained only to be executed. It was the time for the general gaol-delivery ; and the order for his execution was given, along with that for the other prisoners who had been capitally convicted. Together with the warrant for the execution of these, the governor issued his order to release the condemned felon Barabbas.

The punishment of death upon the cross was of the most painful and disgraceful kind. None but the vilest criminals were crucified ; and the manner

in which crucifixion was performed inflicted the greatest agony upon the sufferer. A cross was made of a long piece of timber, large enough to support the body of a man ; near one end of which a shorter piece was fastened, long enough to receive his outstretched arms. The criminal was first scourged upon his bare back ; and then, bleeding with his stripes, he was forced to carry this heavy piece of wood to the place of execution. During this painful journey, the unhappy person was exposed to all the insults and abuse of the crowd who usually assembled to witness such a procession. When arrived at the fatal spot, the cross was laid on the ground, and the criminal was stripped of his clothes, and placed on it upon his back, with his feet tied together, and his arms outstretched. Large nails were then driven through his hands and his feet into the wood. When this had been done, and a hole dug in the ground, the cross was lifted up by the executioners ; who, to fix it more firmly in the earth, usually let it fall into the hole with great violence ; in consequence of which the poor sufferer was shaken in the most dreadful manner, so that all his weight hung upon the nails with which his hands and feet were fastened to the wood. In this most agonizing situation the wretched man was left to die of hunger and suffering ; and sometimes persons have been known to remain two days in this condition before death put an end to their misery.

It was to this inhuman punishment that the sentence of the Roman governor condemned the innocent Jesus ; and the first part of it was administered immediately. The scourging took place at once :—with his flesh torn by the stripes which Pilate had already inflicted upon him, in



the hope of satisfying the Jews with that lesser punishment, his back was again exposed to the lash of the soldiers ; and when he had received this preparatory suffering, he was delivered to them to be crucified.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. Every thing that was done at this eventful trial, tended to bring out more clearly the proof, that Jesus was indeed the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot : one who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. The hearer then judge himself gave the strongest testimony of this, and endeavoured to intercede with the people on his behalf, in order to find a way by which he might spare his own conscience the burden of taking away the life of an innocent man. The intercession of Pilate, mixed up with the violence of the people, is a representation of that which frequently takes place in the mind of one who is ensnared into some temptation to commit sin. Self-will, which violently desires to gain the sinful gratification, may be said to cry out in the heart, 'Crucify him, crucify him ;' while conscience suggests the restraint proposed by Pilate — 'Shall I crucify my king ?'—for the commission of every known sin, by a professing christian, crucifies the Son of God afresh, and puts him to open shame. When self-will prevails, the unhappy sinner practically confesses that he has no king but the prince of this world, from whom alone he can expect the reward of his service.

#### QUESTIONS.

Who is the king to whom my soul is subject ? Does my obedience to Christ prove that He is my king ?

Does my secret desire cry out to crucify Christ by committing sin?

2. This passage affords us a remarkable instance of the interference of Providence on behalf of the injured Jesus; even the sleep of a heathen woman was disturbed by dreams, in a manner which must have been providential, and not by chance. There have been many occasions in which God has spoken to his own servants in dreams, that have produced their intended effect: but here we have an instance in which the Lord permitted a warning to be given to heathens, not his own servants, which will only rise up in judgment against those who neglected it, while it confirms the testimony of the innocence of Jesus. Many a sinner might have been warned from his sins by attention even to a dream which might have brought him to consider his ways, before he closed the door of grace against himself. Dreams may be sinful, or childish; but if they suggest thoughts which lead the mind to weigh actions in the balance of God's truth, they may be the means appointed of God for hindering from the commission of sin.

#### QUESTIONS.

Have I ever been superstitiously alarmed by dreams into the commission of sin?

Am I ready to turn superstitious fears to good account by making them occasions for seeking God's help to serve Him by resisting sin?

3. The Jews were intent upon saving Barabbas, and crucifying Jesus; and herein they aptly represent the world, who are willing to excuse one person who commits an offence upon worldly principles, while they will charge the same offence as inexcusable upon another who maintains the spiritual profession of the religion of Jesus. Of one "who will live godly in Christ Jesus," the language

of the children of the world has ever been, "away with such a fellow;" while they excuse one who sets up no light of the Holy Spirit to shew the darkness of the spirit of the world. But how sadly will every worldling find himself involved in the crime of that cry which prevailed with Pilate;—"crucify him—crucify him."

## QUESTIONS.

Have I been strict in charging an apparent fault upon a religious person because I dislike their religion?

And have I been ready to excuse the same kind of fault in worldly persons when they make no great profession of religion?

4. This portion relates the great act upon which turned the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ:—the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot, proved to be sinless by every testimony. The Saviour was judicially given up to the consequences of sin. All the actors in this scene were fearfully blinded. Pilate struggled with his conscience, but overcame it under the pressure of circumstances, taking care at the same time to sooth it with a delusive device. "I protest against this" has often been the balm with which a wilful sinner has quieted his conscience, while conniving at an act he might have prevented; and every act against the conscience is like Pilate's, for every sin crucifies Christ. "I wash my hands of it" has ever been the way by which a trembling sinner has escaped, as he thinks from a course of sin which he ought to have hindered others from following; but the plea of the sinner in such circumstances is of no more avail, than was the water used by Pilate really to cleanse him from the crime which he was committing.

## QUESTIONS:

Have I partaken of a sin against the struggles of my own conscience? while I have calmed those struggles by protesting against the sin?

Have I thought to wash my hands of the blame of any conduct while I have let others do the evil I might have prevented?

5. The people gained their end by a ready cry of, "his blood be upon us, and upon our children;" how little did they think that now, nearly two thousand years after that cry, their children dispersed in all the world would bear the weight of that bloody deed. It is often seen, that when the mind has been earnestly intent upon the indulgence of a sinful desire, which appears to be at length within the grasp, the poor sinner will take any consequences rather than lose the object. Here were awful results imprecated by the Jews at the very moment of gaining their end; and how often have wretched sinners cried "I'll take all the consequences," that they might gain the momentary gratification of sin. How heavy does the blood of Jesus lie now upon the souls of the Jews who prevailed with Pilate! How terrible are now the consequences of those sins which infidel worldlings have lived in, and died in; feeling them as lightly while in this life, as did the Jews the weight of that blood which they laid upon their children.

#### QUESTIONS.

How often has the near grasp of a desired sin made me bold in taking upon myself all the future consequences?

How often have I found the consequences more serious than ought reasonably to have been undertaken, even putting my own value upon the sinful pleasure which produced them?

How can I bear the consequences of crucifying Christ by my sin hereafter, if I lose the benefit of salvation by means of His atonement now?

6. The release of Barabbas suggests to the mind the object of the glorious Gospel, and represents it by a striking instance of its application. Pilate had chosen the worst of the wretched criminals in the prison to present to the people,

along with the innocent Jesus, for them to select which should be set at liberty. They chose Barabbas ; and therefore it may be truly said that Jesus suffered instead of this sinner ; and that the most wretched criminal was freed from his condemnation by the sacrifice of Christ his substitute. Though his release was from an earthly sentence, it pictures the more important spiritual salvation which was procured by the same sacrifice : and there is no sinner, however great his offence, to whom it may not apply ; so that it may be truly said that the death of Christ was instead of his condemnation. (1 John i. 7. 1 Tim. i. 15. Rom. iv. 25. John iii. 14—17.) The scourging of Jesus, which began the great act of his atonement, brings at once to our minds the blessed effects of his punishment, as they were promised by the prophet, and specially applied by the Apostle :—“ with his stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah liii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 5.) It is in this point of view that the scourging of the Lord is most wonderful, and his patient endurance of it most deeply affecting to those whose sins prepared the lash by making it necessary : but it must be a faithful application of the guilt to ourselves which can alone enable the heart to receive the healing ; or affect it with a sense of the love of Jesus, who “ was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.”

## QUESTIONS.

Am I sensible of the sinfulness of my own sins for which Christ suffered instead of me ?

Do I feel comfort in finding that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin ?

What effect is produced in my heart when, hearing of the scourging of Jesus, I reflect that “ by his stripes I am healed ?”

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray to be made an obedient subject of the King of kings, the Lord Jesus ; and to be kept from crucifying him afresh by sin.

2. Pray to be kept from superstition ; and to be able to turn every superstitious fear into a spiritual help in holiness.

3. Pray for grace to judge impartially and charitably concerning the faults charged upon christians, without being misled through prejudice.

4. Pray for grace to judge of the sinfulness of your own actions, without resorting to delusive protests or excuses.

5. Pray for a clear and simple view of the consequences of sin, and for grace to be kept from plunging into them without consideration.

6. Give thanks to God for the blessed atonement of Jesus Christ, and praise Him for the blood that cleanseth from all sin.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Almighty God, who hast given thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ to be King of kings, and Lord of lords, prepare me by thy grace for His kingdom of glory ; and so subdue in me all worldly and carnal desires, that I may delight in being obedient to his spiritual dominion now, that I may be a partaker of his kingdom hereafter.

(2) Teach me to distinguish between superstitious fear and spiritual watchfulness ; enable me to avoid every snare to evil from superstition, and to turn every thing that might lead me to that danger into a means of promoting holiness.

(3) Give me a clear and unprejudiced judgment concerning the errors of others, under the guidance of a spirit of charity ; (4) and enable me especially to exercise such judgment concerning my own conduct ; without being self-deceived by protesting against the sins which I commit, or excusing myself for those which I allow. (5) Keep me ever alive to the dreadful consequences of sin ; and let me not be carried away by temptation, to venture to draw upon myself, without consideration, the fearful effects of thy anger against sin. (6) Praised be thy holy name, that in thy mercy thou hast provided a means of escape from sin in the blessed atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and praised be thy gracious name, that His blood cleanseth from all sin. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

## ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SEVENTH PORTION.

Jesus led to execution.

PLACE.—*The common hall of Pilate's palace ; and the Street in Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*About eight o'clock on the morning of Friday, the 5th of April.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvii. v. 27 to 32.

St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xv. ver. 16 to 21.

St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxiii. v. 26 to 32.

St. John's Gospel, c. xix. ver. 16 & 17 (pt.)

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

When Jesus had undergone the preparation for his crucifixion by being scourged, and was now left in the custody of the Roman soldiers who were to carry the sentence into execution, they led him into the great hall of the governor's palace, where they called together all the rest of the guard. It was a strange offence for which their prisoner was condemned ;—as far as they knew about it, he had pretended that he was a king, and was sentenced to death because his claim to be king was a rebellion against the authority of their master, the Roman Emperor. He must have appeared to them to be little more than a mad enthusiast, and they began to treat him accordingly. They re-

peated the mockery which they had used at the former scourging : they took off his own garment, and decked him with a purple or scarlet robe, such as was worn by persons of high rank amongst the Romans : they put again the twisted circle of thorns upon his head, to represent a kingly crown ; they replaced the reed in his right hand, in imitation of the sceptre which kings hold in token of power : and when they had thus dressed him out in a way which suited what they considered his folly in calling himself a king, they pretended in rude mirth to pay him the respect which was given to kings,—bowing down and kneeling before him, and mocking him with expressions of feigned reverence—“ Hail, king of the Jews.” Then, to shew how little right he had to the title, some spit upon him ; and others snatched the reed out of his hand, and struck him on the head with it ; while others were continuing their mockery of worship. When these heathen soldiers had satisfied themselves with their unfeeling derision of the Lord Jesus, they took off the kingly robe from him, and gave him his own garment again. They then proceeded to the fulfilment of the remainder of his sentence, by leading him forth from the palace to the place of execution.

The sentence of crucifixion required that he should carry his cross to the place of execution ; and accordingly, as he was led forth, the heavy piece of timber was placed upon his shoulders and bleeding back. The human body in which he “ became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ” (Phil. ii. 8), was unable, after all the sufferings he had already endured, to support the weight thus put upon him ; and as he was



fainting under it, the officer found it necessary to give him some assistance. The soldiers therefore laid hold on the first man they happened to fix upon from amongst the crowd, and pressed him into the service of bearing the cross after Jesus. This man's name was Simon ; he belonged to the distant city of Cyrene in Africa ; happening to be coming into Jerusalem out of the country, he was passing by that way just as the Lord was led forth with the cross upon his shoulder. What effect the sight of the suffering Saviour had upon the heart of this Cyrenian we are not told ; but we have reason to know that the members of his family became the disciples of Christ ; for St. Mark, in writing an account of this transaction from Rome, refers to Simon's sons, Alexander and Rufus, as persons known in the church : and St. Paul, in writing afterwards to the "saints in Rome," sends christian salutations to Rufus, as one chosen in the Lord, and to his mother. (Rom. xvi. 13.)

As Jesus was supporting that part of the cross which may be called the head of it, and was dragging the principal beam behind him, the soldiers made Simon take up the other end, and so share the burthen with him, bearing it after him. There were two other condemned criminals, whose sentences were to be executed at the same time ; these, carrying their crosses, formed with him the mournful procession of death through the streets of Jerusalem.

The crowd which followed the procession was very great ; and amongst them were a number of women, inhabitants of the city, who must often have observed Jesus "going about and doing

good" (Acts x. 38); and now seeing him in so distressing a condition, gave way to the natural feelings of their sex, and lamented over him with evident signs of grief. But Jesus addressed them, and bid them not weep for him, but for themselves and for their children: for he warned them of the dreadful times which were coming upon their nation; when, in consequence of the wretchedness and misery that would abound those women who had never been mothers would be considered more happy than those, who had borne children only to perish miserably. He bid them look forward to the days, long ago foretold but now near at hand, when the Jews would have to suffer for the dreadful crime then about to be committed in his crucifixion, and would desire to be crushed by the mountains rather than bear what was inflicted upon them;—referring them also to the still more terrible judgment hereafter, when they would "say to the mountains, cover us, and to the hills, fall on us." (Deut. xxviii. Hosea x. 8. Rev. vi. 14-16.) And he applied to the case the proverbial expression, "if it fare thus with the green tree, how will it fare with the dry;" as though he would have said, 'if this is the way in which an innocent man is treated, how dreadful will be the outpouring of the wrath justly due to the Jews, whose hardened state makes them fit subjects for vengeance.' (Prov. xi. 31. Jer. xxv. 39.)

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures, See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. He who was the subject of this cruel mockery was indeed a king. The heathen soldiers who derided him have by this time found it out; and

when their spirits left their mortal bodies, what an awful discovery it must have been to them, that the despised madman, whose pretensions they laughed at, was the Lord of Glory, the Maker and Governor of the world ! But will not those, who treat the doctrines of Jesus in a light and irreverent manner now, find themselves in a situation similar in kind, whatever difference there may be in degree ? It is to be feared that many persons, who profess to be christians, are yet so little aware of the real majesty of the Lord Christ, that by unseemly disrespect towards the things of his religion—his name—his word—his day—his ministers—his people, they are bringing upon themselves something like the same surprise, and the awful condemnation, due to the blasphemy of these heathen soldiers.

## QUESTIONS.

Have I any light feeling concerning the things of religion ?

Do I ever allow myself to give expression to irreverent words with respect to religion, or any thing connected with it ?

2. Our Lord has shewn us how to apply the expression of bearing our cross ; and he has taught us that if we would follow him we must not only bear our cross, but willingly take it up. (Matt. xvi. 24. Luke ix. 23 ; xiv. 27.) When any matter presses hard upon us and seems to be an insupportable trial, we have but to look to Jesus, who in bearing *his* cross truly bore ours ; and whatever affliction his providence may appoint to us in the way of chastisement, is but putting the honour upon us of calling us to bear the cross after him. A watchful self-examination is necessary while we consider the painful story of the Passion of Christ ; for our foolish hearts are too often apt to be moved by the distressing nature of

the circumstances themselves, without considering our personal interest in the cross and its consequences. It would be a sad waste of tears to weep over the agonies of Christ as if they were a moving tale, unless at the same time we weep for our sins which caused him to stand in that suffering situation.

#### QUESTIONS.

Am I willing to take up my cross? What is it that I feel to be my cross? and how do I conduct myself under the trouble it causes me?

Am I looking to Jesus for strength to be able to bear my cross?

Do I remember that my sins were the occasion of his bearing it?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for a serious feeling in connexion with everything which in any way belongs to Christ.

2. Pray for grace to be able to follow Christ, in taking up the cross which God may see fit to lay upon you.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) Almighty God, Creator of all things, give me, I implore thee, a holy fear at the thought of Thee, and of every thing which thou hast consecrated by connecting with it thy great name. Give me a deep reverence in speaking of Thee, and of those things which draw the thoughts to Thee. (2) Teach me to lay aside every weight, and the sin which does most easily beset me, that I may run with patience the race set before me, looking unto Jesus: let me follow him, taking up the cross after him: make me to count it a joy and an honour, to suffer in any degree for his name's sake; and by thy Holy Spirit so convince me of sin, that I may mourn for my own share in making the cross necessary, which was borne for me by the love of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

# ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-EIGHTH PORTION.

The crucifixion.

PLACE.—*Calvary, outside the gate of Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*Nine o'clock in the morning of Friday, the 5th of April.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvii. v. 33 to 43.

St. Mark's Gospel, c. xv. ver. 22 to 32 (pt.)

St. Luke's Gospel, c. xxiii. ver. 33 to 38.

St. John's Gospel, c. xix. part v. 17 to 24.

## III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

Matt. xxvii. verse

33, &c. vesture *means here* inner garment

37, &c. his accusation . . . . the offence for which  
he was condemned

Mark xv. verse

26, &c. superscription . . . . writing

Luke xxiii. verse

35. derided . . . . . laughed at

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

The procession arrived at the place of execution. This was a spot outside of the city of Jerusalem which was called the place of skulls (Calvary, or Golgotha), probably from the number of human bones which were to be found there ;

as many bodies were left on the crosses after death ; and, being devoured by ravenous birds, the bones were scattered about. It was the custom to give a stupifying mixture to the wretched criminals who were about to be put upon the cross ; intending, with a kind of inconsistent mercy, to render the poor creatures insensible to the cruel torments about to be inflicted on them. Such a mixture was made ready for Jesus, and offered to him when they were preparing the cross to receive his body. He did but put it to his lips, and then refused to drink it—He had undertaken to bear the whole wrath of God against sin ; and the object of this potion was to relieve him from a part of it. The cup which His Father had given him to drink, he was prepared to empty, even to the very dregs (John xviii. 11) ; but this cup which was offered to him was to soften the bitterness of the other, therefore he refused it.

Then the soldiers laid the three crosses upon the ground, and proceeded to strip the bodies of those who were to be crucified. They tied the feet of our Lord, and spread his arms upon the beam, and drove the large nails which were to support the weight of his body through his hands and feet, fastening them to the wood. While this cruel act was being performed, the self-denying Jesus was less occupied about his own sufferings than with the fearful consequences to those who were tearing his flesh ; and, in the midst of their hammering, he put up a petition to His heavenly Father on their behalf—“ Father forgive them, they know not what they do.” As soon as this work was completed, the soldiers (being four to

each cross, the whole under the command of a Captain, or Centurion) raised up the crosses, and letting them fall into the holes made to receive them, filled in the earth, and left them standing upright with the living bodies hanging on them by the nails.

It was customary to place upon the top of the cross on which each criminal was executed, a small board bearing his name and condemnation : the Roman governor had commanded such a board to be prepared for the cross of Jesus ; and when this was brought forth to be carried with him to the place of execution, the inscription upon it was seen to be "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." This title, or condemnation, of Jesus was written in the three languages understood by the greater number of people who were at Jerusalem at that time : it was written in Hebrew, which the Scribes and learned Jews would understand ; it was written in Greek, which was the common language employed at that time in communicating between foreigners ; and it was written in Latin, which was the language of the Roman soldiers ; and as the title was exposed in the public place of execution near the city, it could not fail to be noticed by great numbers of the people.

As soon as the chief priests observed what had been thus written and fixed to the cross, they lost no time in appealing to the governor, requesting him to alter the inscription ; and if it were necessary to say anything of his assuming the title, at all events they begged him to put, not that he was, but that he pretended to be, the king of the Jews. Pilate, however, refused to alter what he

had already ordered to be written ;—it was done, and so must remain.

The soldiers had now performed their duty in executing the criminals ; and the clothes of each became the perquisite of the executioners. The garments that had belonged to Jesus were accordingly divided into shares by the four soldiers who had crucified him : under the outer cloak it was customary to wear an inner garment, which was usually made of two pieces, one placed in front, and the other at the back, and tied together at the sides and upon the shoulders : it happened however that the inner garment worn by our blessed Lord was not of this ordinary kind, but was made of one entire piece, woven without a seam. When the soldiers examined this article of our Lord's dress, they found that it would be of no value if divided as the common tunic might have been ; and therefore they agreed that, instead of separating it to make up the four portions required, they would cast lots who should have the whole. By this means, the passage in the twenty-second Psalm was minutely fulfilled, in which, in the prophetic account of the crucifixion, it is said (verse 18) " They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

As soon as this was done, the soldiers sat down to watch the dying agony of the Lord, over whom they had placed his written accusation, and on either side of whom they had executed one who had been guilty of theft ; thereby fulfilling, to the letter, that other Scripture, " He was numbered with the transgressors." (Isa. liii. 12.)

A number of people collected together to see



the public execution of the criminals on Calvary ; and as the place must have been a great thoroughfare near the entrance of the city, many were passing by at the time. These were attracted by the apparent failure of all the high expectations raised by one who had made so much noise in the world for some time past ; and they ridiculed and abused him, making motions with their heads, and twitting him with what he was reported to have said. As he had boasted of being able to destroy the Temple, and then to build it up again in three days, they bid him shew some proof of such a power, by saving himself from the destruction which had come upon him. They bid him shew that he was the Son of God, by coming down from the cross to which he was nailed.

While the vulgar crowd were thus publicly expressing their mockery, there were others who were saying the same things among themselves. The chief priests, the scribes, the elders and heads of the people, had come to see the success of their long-planned schemes ; and were giving vent to their pleasure in abuse and derision of Jesus. ‘ He professed to be the Saviour of other people ; but he could not save himself ;’ — ‘ if he were the chosen Messiah, he would surely be able to do this.’ They made the title over his head the occasion of new insults. ‘ He was the King of Israel—the Christ forsooth—let him give a specimen of his power by descending from his cross ; then they would be convinced, and believe him to be the Messiah.’ They also upbraided him in the very words which had been foretold in the twenty-second Psalm (verse 8, see the margin),—“ He trusted on the Lord, that he

would deliver him : let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."

The Roman soldiers joined in the mockery, which they saw excited in every body about them ; and though they knew nothing of the particular cause of excitement to the mind of a Jew, yet it was to them sufficiently absurd, that this poor man from Galilee should have called himself a king. They therefore laughed at him ; and held up the canteens in which they carried their vinegar (Ruth ii. 14), (which was the drink of refreshment supplied to the Roman army), asking him whether he would have some ; and bidding him do as the chief priests told him, and shew that he was the king of the Jews by saving himself.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. The self-denial of our Lord cannot but strike the mind, upon reading this part of his sufferings. Under such circumstances, who would not have been too fully engrossed with himself, to have thought upon the distresses of any other being upon earth ? And who were those for whom he found feeling at such a moment to intercede ? Those who were occupied in inflicting his agonies, and who had found a brutal pleasure in going beyond their appointed duty, by mocking and insulting him whom they had only been commanded to execute. At such a moment the condemnation due to the wickedness of his enemies was in our Lord's sight so terrible a prospect, that he forgot himself in bringing their case before God ; and instead of urging their conduct to him

in aggravation of their punishment, he rather urged their ignorance in mitigation of their offence. If we belong to Christ we must by his Spirit partake of his character—be of the mind that was in him—and be conformed to his image. Does our habitual self-denial resemble this? Is our forgiveness of injuries after this model? Do we thus search for a plea to bring our enemies before the throne of grace so as to obtain pardon? These are searching questions; and if we put them close to our consciences, they ought to act upon us as the nails did upon the body of Christ—piercing us sharply indeed, only to make us take more fast hold of His Cross.

## QUESTIONS.

How do I treat those who hurt me and seem to take pleasure in wounding my feelings?

Do I pray for my enemies? and with earnestness?

2. Here was a singular instance of God's Providence overruling an ignorant man's mind to declare the truth. It seems to have been a spirit of derision to the Jews, which made the Roman governor state the crime of Jesus in words which, of themselves, conveyed no notion of criminality; and after having endeavoured to procure the release of the innocent Jesus, we may well suppose that he wrote the title under the same feeling as that which made him wash his hands when condemning him; with this also corresponds his answer to the chief priests, "What I have written, I have written." But, whatever was Pilate's secret feeling upon the subject, it was employed by the providence of God in setting up a public inscription of that truth, which marked the crucified one as that great king, to whom belongs the kingdom

of David; and who shall one day sit upon the throne of David, to order and to establish the government of it for ever. (Isaiah ix. 7. Luke i. 32, 33.) Pilate has found out by this time the literal truth of what he wrote; and so have those Jews who cried out, "Crucify him," because he said he was their king. The inscription placed on that cross contained the whole Gospel, condensed into those few words; and how many there are, who, while they crucify Christ under a false view of what the Gospel is, would willingly alter that truth which involves the offence of the cross; and would try to find an excuse for their sins, under a perverted statement of Gospel doctrine.

#### QUESTIONS.

Am I willing to consent to the doctrines of the Gospel as true, although they bring me in guilty of crucifying Christ by my sins?

Do I acknowledge Jesus to be the king of the Jews, though I only see him now as the crucified one?

3. In the circumstances of the crucifixion we perceive a minute fulfilment of the Scriptures; and it should lead us to anticipate a similar fulfilment of every word, which the Spirit of God has written concerning the future glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. The apparently trifling accident, as many would call it, by which Jesus happened to wear a particular kind of garment, was made the means of fulfilling exactly the prophetic declaration that David had given in the twenty-second Psalm; and the multitude of equally accidental circumstances connected with the apprehension, trial, and condemnation of the two thieves, were all made to serve the same end of fulfilling the word of God, as he had spoken it by the mouth of Isaiah. In tracing out this, we may learn to esti-

mate the minute performance of that word, in which we are taught that "the very hairs of our head are all numbered."

QUESTIONS.

Do I practically doubt the particular providence of God in the affairs of men, by tracing his hand only in what I consider to be important matters?

Am I ready to acknowledge that God's minute care for me may make use of the slightest events in order to shew his power?

4. In the latter part of this portion we have another instance of the manner in which a statement of truth may be ignorantly made, without any intention of the meaning which the words truly express. (See application 2.) "He saved others; himself he cannot save." This was cast in his teeth; while in truth it is the highest point of the love of Christ, and the justice of God, that Jesus did not save himself, just because in order that he might save others, he must necessarily sacrifice himself. "Mercy and truth met together" only on the cross of Jesus;—God's righteousness and man's "peace kissed each other" only when "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." (Psalm lxxxv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 19.) The same ignorance has always beset the infidel and the unbeliever; and even in days of greater knowledge, the same unbelief is shewn by the manner in which many seek for other grounds for salvation than the atonement of Christ alone; whereby which they practically manifest, that they think the atonement of Christ has failed as to the great results promised concerning it. The use of the very words of the twenty-second Psalm with which the chief priests must have been familiar, shews us how little the mere knowledge of Scripture by rote is likely to influence the con-

duct. In making use of the same expression as that occurring in the 8th verse, they were not aware of the testimony they were giving to the truth of Jesus's fulfilment of the prophecy that Psalm contains. And so it often happens, that mere professors, whose early instruction or attendance upon christian worship has made them acquainted with the Scriptures, are continually testifying to the truth of the Gospel-statements against worldliness, by their own opinions and expressions relating to the worldly course they follow.

The people who had been impressed for a time with the miracles by which Jesus "saved others," were altogether changed in their feelings by seeing his humiliation and suffering. This changeableness is a common result of religious impressions produced merely by circumstances. When religion comes in the form of power and benefit, many are impressed with the truth; but when its suffering, trying, purifying, humbling effects are put forth, many of those who were impressed alter their view altogether. This was shewn by those who left Jesus because of his hard saying (John vi. 60, 66); and it was illustrated by the altered conduct of the Jewish people, who, when they saw him on the cross, sneered at his saving others, which before had excited their admiration. The Roman soldiers also joined in the sneer and the mockery; shewing how easily the feeling against religion is caught even by persons altogether ignorant of its nature and its truth.

#### QUESTIONS.

Have I a just sense of the love of Christ, shewn by his dying to save sinners, since it was impossible that they could be saved, if he saved himself from the cross?

Do I make use of my knowledge of Scripture practically, in regulating my conduct, or do I know it only by rote without understanding its application ?

Are my religious impressions only suited to the bright side of the subject ? Do my opinions waver when a painful application of religious truth is made ?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Ask for a spirit of forgiveness and of prayer, that you may be able to pray for those who do you harm.

2. Pray to be humbled by the feeling that your own sins produced the punishment of Christ ; and that you may receive the gospel with more earnestness on account of that feeling.

3. Pray to be enlightened to see and know the particular care which God has over you by his providence ; and ask that he may mercifully fulfil his word and promises concerning you, by all his providential dealings with you.

4. Pray for such a sense of Christ's love in dying for you, as shall make you more anxious to secure the salvation which required the sacrifice of himself ; and ask for an applying knowledge of the word which brings that salvation.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) God of all mercy, power, and love, grant to me, thine unworthy servant, such a gift of the Holy Spirit, that I may overcome all revengeful feelings ; and may have the Spirit of love to enable me to love those that hate me, and to pray for them that despitefully use me and persecute me. Have mercy upon all those who may have sinfully offended or harmed me ; and teach me to forgive them, as I desire forgiveness for my manifold sins at thy hands, for Christ Jesus's sake.

(2) Let the sense of my sinfulness, and of the price that it cost to redeem me from sin, keep me ever humble and watchful against sin ; and let the agony of Jesus in atoning for my sin make me feel more earnest in taking advantage of his blessed Atonement, and in securing the benefits of His Gospel. (3) Teach me to understand

more of the care of thy providence, and of the manifestation of thy marvellous power in working by the smallest events to produce thy blessings towards me ; and oh gracious God, I implore thee to grant that by thy merciful providence, all the purposes and promises set forth in thy Holy Word may be applied and fulfilled, to the saving and purifying of my soul. (4) Let the faithful view of thy beloved Son dying on the cross affect me with a continuing and increasing love towards Him who first loved me, and died for my sins. May the contemplation of that sacrifice of Christ quicken me to strive to secure the salvation He thus purchased ; and lead me to search humbly in thy Scriptures for the saving application of that word, which I earnestly entreat thee to give me for the same Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father, &c.



## ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-NINTH PORTION.

The two thieves.—*Conversation, No. 70.*

PLACE.—*Calvary, outside the gate of Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*Before noon on the morning of Friday, the 5th of April.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. xxvii. ver. 44.

St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xv. ver. 32 (pt.)

St. Luke's Gospel, c. xxiii. ver. 39 to 43.

### III. THE MEANINGS;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

While the Lord Jesus, as he hanged upon the cross, was the object of the rude scoffing of the people, and the sneers of the chief priests, there was yet another person who joined in reviling him. The cross of our Lord was raised up between those on which the two criminals were hanging; and one of them, in the midst of his acute sufferings, was hardened enough to repeat some of the expressions which were made use of against Jesus by the crowd. He bid him give a proof that he was the Christ, by saving both himself, and those who were suffering the same punishment with him. "Save thyself and us," said the wretched man in mockery. But his companion on the other cross was of a different spirit. We are not told what means was employed by

the grace of God to change this man's heart; but it appears that the sight of the suffering Jesus, with his true title written over him, led the converted criminal to reprove his hardened fellow-sufferer. He asked him whether he did not fear God, even while he was receiving the condemnation in which they were all joined. But there was this great difference in the condition of each, that he who was reproofing, and his fellow-sinner to whom he spoke, were only receiving the just punishment for their crimes; whereas the sufferer between them was perfectly innocent of any thing which could deserve such a condemnation. Then turning to Jesus, he addressed Him as his Lord; and asked that he would remember him when he should come to take possession of that kingdom in truth, of which his cross bore the title in mockery.

Our Lord replied to this request by assuring the penitent criminal that before that very day was over he should be with him in that place of the departed spirits which he called "paradise."

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures: see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. This most remarkable conversation between the three persons in the agonies of crucifixion, conveys instructive lessons to a christian. It is not suffering, even under a just condemnation, which in any degree tends to soften the heart; of this we have a plain proof in the hardened conduct of one of these criminals; who, in the midst of his agonies, could join with the careless crowd in the railing against Jesus. The different conduct therefore of the other felon, must be attributed not to the suffering of punishment, but

to the influence of divine grace ; and this instance of a sinner converted at the last moment, by the sight of the Saviour on the cross, should lead us to continue to lift up Christ, and him crucified, to the greatest sinner, as long as he lives, with the hope that it may please God to turn the hardened heart at last ; but, on the other hand, while it shews indeed the power of the love of Christ, it affords no encouragement whatever to continue in the sinful course which this man had followed. It is the only instance of the kind given in Scripture ; and may be said to be an exception to the general order of God's dealing with sinners, as that order is explained in the whole of His word. Such an exception mercifully opens the door to christian hearts to hope on behalf of others who know nothing of the truth, and who have continued ignorant, even while in gross sin (1 Tim. i. 13) ; but it cannot reasonably afford the slightest encouragement to the sinner himself, who, having become acquainted with the Gospel, has gone on in willing sin in spite of his knowledge. Such a one *may* indeed become a subject of divine grace, because there is no limit to the mercy of God in Christ ; but this passage of Scripture can afford him no ground of expectation ; because the thief who was with Christ on the cross, and in paradise, believed in the salvation of Jesus as soon as it was brought to his knowledge. He prayed to the Lord, as his King and his Saviour, while there was yet no other evidence before him, than that which made his companion join in the revilings of the senseless crowd against the crucified one, who had disappointed their expectation—he looked forward to the reality of Jesus's kingdom, even while the

king was being crucified for claiming it—and he brought forth at once the only fruits that the circumstances allowed, by professing his faith, and defending his Saviour against the revilings of others when they had the upper hand. As this passage of Scripture has been much misapplied, and turned to evil by sinners who have thereby hardened themselves in sin, it is the more important that these points should be observed, in order to avoid the evil application, and to profit by the good which this blessed mark of Christ's love to sinners is so well adapted to convey, as the Lord's practical manifestation of the truth that “when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” (Rom. v. 6—8.)

#### QUESTIONS.

What effect is produced in me by the mercy of Christ to the thief upon the cross?

Am I more affected by the love of Christ to sinners, than by the hope of being saved at the last though I continue in sin?

Do I receive the truth of the Gospel freely, and at once?

Do I pray to Christ as my king, and look forward to the setting up of his kingdom?

Do I take every proper opportunity of reproving those persons who speak improperly of Christ in my company, whether amongst those who encourage such conduct or not?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray to have a deeper conviction of your own sinfulness, and a more powerful love to Christ, who loved you while you were uninfluenced by love to Him.

2. Pray to have grace to reprove every open reviling of true religion.

3. Pray to Christ, that he may remember you when he shall come again in His glorious kingdom.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) Search me, O God, and try my heart, and make me to know my secret faults: deepen, I beseech thee, my conviction of sin, that I may

truly feel that I am in thy sight, even as the thief upon the cross. Draw my heart to thee, O Saviour, that I may feel that thou art to me, even as thou wast to him—loving me while I am yet without strength,—so that I may love thee because thou hast first loved me. (2) Give me courage and wisdom, that I may stand forward in thy cause whenever dishonour is done to Thy name. (3) And, O Lord Jesus, I beseech Thee to remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. AMEN. Our Father, &c.

## TWO HUNDREDTH PORTION.

Jesus and his mother.

PLACE.—*Calvary ; outside the gate of Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*Before noon on Friday, the 5th of April.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. John's Gospel, chap. xix. ver. 25 to 27.

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

Amongst all the followers of Jesus, there were but four who ventured, in that hour of distress and danger, to be near the suffering Saviour. Three of these were women ;—Mary, the mother of our Lord ; her sister, or cousin, whose name was also Mary, and who was married to a man named Cleophas ; and Mary Magdalene. The fourth

person was the beloved disciple, John. These were all standing by the cross on which Jesus hung; and seeing them there, he spoke to his mother, and bid her look upon John in future as her son; then speaking to John, he desired him to consider Mary as his mother. John felt that he was thus appointed to stand in the place of a son to the mother of Jesus, who must by this time have become a widow, although we are not told of the death of Joseph. From that moment John took care of her, sharing with her his home. Some have supposed that, upon this guardianship being given to him by the Lord, John removed Mary at once from the cross, and took her home immediately. This is believed to be the meaning of the words "from that hour that disciple took her to his own home;" because, when mention is made of the "women looking on afar off," about three hours after this, at the moment of Christ's death, the other two women are particularly named as being among them, but the name of the mother of Jesus is omitted. (Mark xv. 40. Matt. xxvii. 55, 56.)

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture, See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

The fact that Jesus is perfectly a man as well as perfect God is plainly stated throughout the Scriptures; but perhaps nothing is more calculated to bring this fact with powerful application to our hearts, than the occasional proofs of his human affections, entirely free from sin, but evidently sympathising with the constitution of man's nature as God made him good. The son's tender love for the mother appeared in the manner in which

Jesus provided for the care and protection which a widowed woman needed in a world of sorrow and sin ; and while it sets an example to children as regards their conduct to their parents, it supplies us with a powerful testimony that our Saviour, as man, does not lose the feeling for the comparatively trifling wants of men, in the greatness of his glory and work as God. This thought is full of comfort when any afflicted christians are suffering from the loss of that which they loved, and can therefore feel themselves as in the situation of Mary at the foot of the cross. The proof that Christ's agonies did not overcome his affections, but that even then he attended to the grief of her whom he loved, should lead us to feel that from on high he can look down upon his beloved people, and make fitting provision for their protection, fulfilling his word to his disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless" (or orphans, as it is in the margin, John xiv. 18.)

#### QUESTIONS.

How far has my conduct as a child towards my parents borne the character of Jesus's conduct to his mother ?

What notions have I of the sympathy of Jesus with his people upon earth ? Do I consider that he possesses and exercises all the sinless affections of a human heart ?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for the spirit of filial affection, honour, and obedience.
2. Pray for a clearer view of the Lord Jesus Christ's human sympathies with the people of God.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O God, who hast appointed thine own name of Father to be given to those who are the fathers of our flesh ; grant that I may ever remember thy commandment with promise, and by the Spirit of thy dear Son, may love, honour, and succour, my father and mother, as those to whom thou hast

given the charge and care of me. (2) And as thou hast given thine only begotten Son to be a man, that he might make us thy children and exalt us unto everlasting life, I beseech thee to enable me to feel with more power the greatness of the blessing that I have an advocate that can be touched with a feeling of my infirmities, and whose heart is filled with the affections which thou hast appointed for the nature of man. Comfort me, by thy Spirit, with this thought, to the glory of the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

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## TWO HUNDRED AND FIRST PORTION.

Jesus yields up the ghost.—*Miracle, No. 41.*

PLACE.—*Calvary, outside the gate of Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*From noon to three o'clock in the afternoon of Friday, the 5th day of April.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER

MAY God, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvii. v. 45 to 56.

St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xv. ver. 33 to 41.

St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxiii. v. 44 to 49.

St. John's Gospel, chap. xix. ver. 28 to 30.

### III. THE MEANINGS;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

That which is called "the sixth hour" in these Scriptures was midday, and our Lord had now hung



upon the cross during three hours. (Mark xv. 25.) At noon, when the sun was in its highest power, it suddenly became quite dark, so that a darkness was spread not only over the land of Judea, where this great event was taking place, but also over the whole world. This continued during three hours, at the end of which time Jesus had been six hours upon the cross. At three o'clock in the afternoon the darkness passed away ; and Jesus then spoke in a loud voice, and repeated the first words of the twenty-second Psalm—" My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." Some persons who were near the Lord's cross and heard him cry out thus, mistook the first words he spoke, " Eli, Eli," for the name Elias ; and they said that he was calling for the prophet Elias.

When Jesus had thus referred to the principal prophecy of his crucifixion, he knew that all the particulars of that great event were now fulfilled ; but in order that every word of the Scripture might be found exactly true, he was pleased to give an opportunity for the fulfilment of the 21st verse of the sixty-ninth Psalm, wherein it had been prophetically spoken of him—" in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." He therefore said, " I thirst." There happened to be a vessel full of vinegar at hand (probably brought there for the soldiers' use) ; and some one put a sponge into it, and placing the filled sponge on the end of a long reed, he raised it up to the lips of our Lord. Another whose attention had been attracted by the supposed call for Elias, bid the man desist, and wait to see whether the prophet would come to take him from the cross.

As soon however as Jesus had taken the vinegar

upon his lips, he said—"It is finished," All, even the most minute details, which had been foretold of his death had been accomplished—the great work of the Atonement was performed. He then cried with a loud voice upon His Father ; and commending His spirit into the hands of that Almighty One, he gave up the ghost.

It was shortly after three o'clock in the afternoon, that the spirit of Jesus Christ departed from his body, to remain for a season amongst the spirits of those who had died in the faith, in the place called in Scripture Hades, or as it is translated into our language "Hell." (Psalm xvi. 10. Acts ii. 27.) This wonderful death was accompanied by outward marks which ought to have drawn the attention of all men to the event. The first of these outward signs, was one that typified in an especial manner the nature of the great work which had been accomplished by the death of Jesus. Between that part of the Temple of God where the sacrifices were offered, and that part which was called the Holy of Holies, into which the High Priest went once in the year, on the day of atonement, there was a double veil, or partition ; which represented the separation made between God and man by sin, and the impossibility of a sinner entering into heaven, pictured by the Holy of holies. (Ex. xxvi. 31-33. Heb. ix. 3.) There was another veil or partition, which divided the court of the Gentiles from the holy place where the sacrifices were offered : beyond this veil no uncircumcised person was ever permitted to pass ; and the veil itself represented the distinction between the Jews, the chosen people of God, and all the other nations of the world. At the moment that

our Lord yielded to the power of death, and "gave up the ghost," the double veil before the Holy of Holies (and perhaps the single veil also), was torn down the middle from the top to the bottom.

Besides this token of the power of the death of Christ, given especially to the Jews, there were wonderful convulsions of nature, which addressed plain warnings to every person, whether Jew or Gentile. There was a great earthquake. Great rocks in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem were torn asunder. Some of the graves were opened, in which the bodies of those persons had been buried, who, like Simeon and Anna, had been "waiting for the consolation of Israel," and "looking for redemption" (Luke ii. 25, 38): and who had died in the faith. The death of the Saviour brought many of these to life again for a season. Their graves were burst open at the moment of his last breath: but He was himself appointed to be the firstfruits of his own triumph over death; and therefore these recalled saints waited until the day of Christ's resurrection, and then they rose from their opened graves, and walked forth into Jerusalem, and shewed themselves alive to many persons who had formerly known them.

It was the duty of the Roman captain with his soldiers, to keep watch upon Calvary, until the criminals whom they had crucified were dead. They must have been greatly surprised at the extraordinary darkness which had come upon them at noon-day: but this only prepared them for the greater astonishment and alarm which they felt, when the earthquake suddenly tore the

rocks around them into pieces. The centurion heard too the piercing cry of the Lord at the moment he resigned himself to death ; and felt that it was this cry which produced all the tremendous result that alarmed them. He remembered the charge which had been brought against Jesus, that he had called himself the Son of God ; and, strange and absurd as this claim had appeared while the soldiers mocked the despised man in the guard-room of Pilate's palace, what he now saw brought conviction to his mind that the claim was founded in truth, and that "truly this man was the Son of God ;"—or as some have supposed him to have said, being a heathen, "truly this man was the son of *a* god."

The crowds of idle people, inhabitants of Jerusalem, who had assembled to see this execution, were awe-struck and terrified, as well as the centurion. With trembling and fore-boding hearts, they returned to their houses, shewing signs of grief and alarm. These people, who had been brought together by a heartless curiosity, or by the savage feeling which makes it a pleasure to some persons to see others in pain, had been held back by no reverence or affection for Jesus ; and had crowded round as near to the cross as the soldiers would permit them to come. Others, however, were drawn by far different feelings. There was a group of affectionate and broken-hearted women, who had been privileged to know Him while he resided in Galilee ; upon some of whom he had performed wonderful miracles ; and who had rejoiced to follow him when he came into Judea, supplying his human necessities out of their own means. Mary Magdalene was one of

these ; and the other Mary also, who was cousin (or perhaps sister) to our Lord's mother. This Mary was the mother of Joses, and of that James who afterwards became Bishop of Jerusalem ; and who was called the lesser, to distinguish him from James the brother of John, who was called the greater. Salome also the wife of Zebedee was there. These stood apart, not daring to approach nearer to the awful scene ; but looking on from a distance with horror.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures. See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. We have considered already the groups of various persons who were engaged in different scenes at Calvary at this eventful moment ; and now we are told of the circumstances of that wonderful end to which, even from the first fall of man, every revelation from God was pointed ;—the sacrifice of the Lamb of God that beareth the sin of the world. The darkness which came miraculously over the world was not only a representation that the light of the world was put out (John viii. 12 ; i. 4, 5) ; but it was also a proof that He who permitted himself to suffer death on the cross, was the God who had power over the created things of which the sun is the centre.

In the extreme point of his agony, Jesus had before his mind all the detail of the Holy Scriptures which testified of himself ; and he brought forward that portion of them which most minutely described the events then passing in the great act of his Atonement. And as another Scripture referred to a matter which had not yet taken place, he hastened to give it the accomplishment

in the most exact manner. This gives us a very strong view of the real value of Scripture, since the mind of Christ could, at such a time, be so intent upon its exact fulfilment ; and if we prized it as this proof of its value should lead us to do, we should be more intent than we commonly are, upon finding the just meaning and true application of every word that the Bible contains, with the unwavering confidence that all God's promises, as well as his threatenings, shall be fulfilled to the very letter. The future events too concerning the coming of Jesus in glory should be expected according to the rule which was suggested when the Lord said that he thirsted, in order that the apparently unimportant incident of their giving him vinegar in his thirst might occur precisely as referred to in the sixty-ninth Psalm. A literal expectation concerning the lesser events of the Lord's coming in glory is more important to a christian than is generally imagined ; and we may gather from this portion our warrant for expecting that the smallest events prophesied in Scripture will take place exactly as they are told beforehand.

#### QUESTIONS.

With what feelings do I contemplate the fact of the death of Jesus ? Has my mind got accustomed to think of it as a common thing ? or am I impressed with something of the awe suited to its effect upon the things of nature which he had created ?

In what light do I consider the lesser statements of Scripture ? Have I full confidence in all the promises—undoubting alarm at all the threatenings—literal expectation concerning all the prophecies ?

2. The wonders that accompanied the death of Christ seem to be too vast for the human mind. The astonishment is so great that it is apt to con-

fuse us. We are besides engrossed with the greater wonder which was the cause of them all. But it would be well to reflect seriously and frequently upon the marks of the power of Christ's death; specially as representing the power which that same death has ever since possessed, and possesses at this present day. The rending of the veil must have astonished the Jews in an especial manner: it shews that the whole system of types was fulfilled, and the occasion for it at an end. It taught that the way into the holiest heaven—even into the presence of God—was laid open by the sacrifice of Christ, the true atoning High Priest. It put aside at once the national separation of the Jews as the only people of God; and made a plain path for the admission of sinners out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. (Rev. v. 11.) We are the sinners to whom that death laid open the Holy of Holies, and made a sure way of access to the presence of the Father. We are the Gentiles who are admitted, by that death, into the possibility of communion with the saints of God, and the privileges of his people. The rending therefore of the veil of the Temple should be as highly interesting a miracle to us, as to the Jews who saw it burst asunder. If the earth quaked at the death of Jesus, how much more when He shall come again to judgment; and each of us must witness the greater earthquake which shall then be. How much will then depend upon the difference, whether we have been awakened by his death, to be partakers of his resurrection in the first place, as His saints (1 Thess. iv. 15-18. 1 Cor. xv. 23. John v. 25); or whether we have continued in the death of sin,

presented on Calvary by the crowd of Jews? or that of which the faithful women were a specimen?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for a deeper feeling of awe in reflecting on the death of Christ, and a more confident and particular expectation of all that is written concerning him.

2. Pray that you may be raised from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness by the power of the atoning death of Christ for your sins.

3. Pray for that spirit of faith, which does not wait for painful proof before it receives and acknowledges truth, and which will enable you to follow Christ through trouble and trial even unto death.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) Gracious and merciful Lord God, open thou mine eyes to behold the wonderful things in thy law. Especially give me so clear a view of that greatest wonder, the death of thy dear Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, that I may feel the awe which becomes a sinner in contemplating such a sacrifice for sin. Make me to examine thy law concerning that Saviour, knowing how he fulfilled every word; and confidently expecting that he will come again to complete the fulfilment in his glory. (2) Oh let his death be my life; and raise me by his Spirit from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness, that I may know the power of his Atonement, and manifest to all around that my life is hid with Christ in Thee. (3) Impart to me more of the Spirit of faith, that I may live upon thy word as truth, without waiting for thy judgments before I believe thy mercy; and enable me by that same Spirit to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, in sorrow for the sin which made him die, and in firm expectation of his strengthening support in all the chastisements which my sin renders necessary. Hear me, oh Father, and give thy Holy Spirit for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.



## TWO HUNDRED &amp; SECOND PORTION.

The body of Jesus pierced.

PLACE.—*Calvary, outside the gate of Jerusalem.*

TIME.—*After three o'clock in the afternoon of Friday, the 5th day of April.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. John's Gospel, chap. xix. ver. 31 to 37.

## III. THE MEANINGS;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

It was now growing late in this eventful day, being past three o'clock in the afternoon; and at sunset (at six o'clock) the sabbath day would commence—the great Sabbath during the feast of the Passover. It was contrary to the Jewish law, for a criminal who had been hanged to remain on the tree all night (Deut. xxi. 22, 23); especially therefore, that he should so remain upon the sabbath day. Accordingly the Jews were desirous that measures should be taken to finish the execution, and take the bodies down without loss of time. It was not uncommon for the soldiers to put an end to the sufferings of persons on the cross, by breaking some of their bones, after they had hung some time; by which their death was hastened, and they were spared many hours of misery. The chief priests and elders therefore went to Pilate, and requested that orders might be given

for despatching the criminals at once, by breaking their legs. To this the governor consented, and sent directions to the soldiers to that effect. These directions were brought after the earthquake had terrified them in the manner which has been described : but this made no difference to the heathen soldiers, who at once obeyed their orders. Some of the party went to the cross on which the thief who had mocked at Jesus was crucified ; and, by breaking his legs, let loose the unhappy spirit from the misery which his body was enduring, to the far greater torment of his final condemnation. Other of the soldiers went to the cross of the penitent thief ; and the blow which brake his legs set free his happy spirit to the enjoyment of that Hades, where Christ had just before gone, and had, by His presence, already turned it into the Paradise in which He had promised they should meet before the day was over. The soldiers who went to the cross of Jesus for the purpose of obeying their orders, found that he was no longer alive, and that it was not necessary to break his legs. One of them however, in mere wantonness, thrust his spear into our Lord's side ; and no sooner had the wound been made, than there streamed forth water and blood (1 John v. 6) ; thus by a wonderful miracle confirming the pledges Christ gave to his Church in the two appointed sacraments. The Apostle John was close to the cross at the time this happened, and he saw the supernatural flow from his Master's side. He specially states the fact in his Gospel, to confirm the faith of those who believe ; and he also points out to us that all these things were done by the soldiers in order that two important passages of Scripture should

receive their fulfilment in Jesus. One is that which relates to the killing of the Paschal Lamb, where it is expressly commanded that a bone of it shall not be broken. (Exod. xii. 46. Numb. ix. 12.) And the other is that where the prophet Zechariah declares, that in the day of the Lord's future coming to Jerusalem in his glory, the Jews shall look upon that Lord, as Him whom they have *pierced*. (Zech. xii. 10.)

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture. See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

The Roman soldiers were little aware what a sermon they were preaching to all generations of God's people, when they broke the bones of the thieves, and pierced the body of the Lord. This action of the soldiers has furnished the Gospel-key, by which all the mysterious Types of the Paschal ceremony, appointed in Egypt, are opened and explained in the atoning death of Jesus. It was done, in order that the Scripture of Moses concerning the Lamb should be fulfilled—"a bone of him shall not be broken;" it points us to all the powerful teaching which that ordinance contains, and applies it to Jesus, as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." The wound of the soldier's spear was made, in order to set that mark of violence upon Him, which shall cover the children of Abraham with shame, when they discover that the glorious conqueror, the touch of whose feet upon the mount of Olives shall rend it asunder, is the very same person whom they rejected and murdered, with the marks of their cruelty upon him. This sad scene therefore leads our minds from the first principles of

the doctrine of Christ, and His atonement (as pointed out in the former Scripture), to the end of the Gospel dispensation—the admission into the glorious inheritance of the saints in light, which is to take place when the latter Scripture shall be fulfilled.

#### QUESTIONS.

Do I apply the instructions of the Old Testament to the better understanding of the doctrine of Christ's salvation?

Do I apply the Spirit of the old appointment of God in making use of the sacramental pledges of Christ Jesus?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray that you may profit from every part of Scripture by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.
2. Pray that you may have wisdom to discern the right application of the Lord's sacramental pledges; and grace to use them aright.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) Merciful God, who hast written all things aforetime for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scripture, might have hope; give me the Holy Spirit, that I may profit by thy instructions of old, and may learn to find the knowledge of Christ in every part. (2) Especially give me wisdom rightly to understand what thou hast written concerning the water and the blood which thou, Lord Jesus, hast made the outward and visible signs of thy Sacramental pledges to thy faithful people; and as thou didst shed out of thy most precious side both water and blood, make me to receive that Spirit flowing from thee, of which thou didst make them the token to those who have a believing remembrance of thy saving Atonement. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

## TWO HUNDRED AND THIRD PORTION.

The Burial. PLACE.—*Near Calvary.*

TIME.—*Before six o'clock in the evening of Friday, the 5th of April.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER

MAY God, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvii. ver. 57 to 61.

St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xv. ver. 42 to 47.

St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxiii. ver. 50 to 56.

St. John's Gospel, chap. xix. ver. 38 to 42.

## III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

Matt. xxvii. verse

60, &c. sepulchre *means here* a place to bury a corpse in

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

The near approach of the Sabbath led to other attempts to close the painful scene at Calvary, besides those of the chief priests and elders. One of the members of the council was of a different spirit from those who had condemned Jesus and procured his execution. This was a rich man, named Joseph, of a city called Arimathæa ; he belonged to the Sanhedrim, but was one who had taken no part in the wicked work in which they had been engaged. He had attended to the preaching of Jesus, and believed his doctrine : and though he had not yet the courage to declare publicly that he followed the despised Nazarene, yet he confidently expected that Jesus, as the Christ, would

establish the kingdom of grace. Finding that Jesus was dead, and considering that there were not three hours before the sabbath would begin, he took courage, and ventured to lay claim to the body of our Lord. The Roman governors generally allowed the friends of persons who had been executed, to take away their bodies for burial : and Joseph now lost no time in applying to Pilate for permission to have the body of Jesus. Pilate had just before given orders that the deaths should be hastened ; and was surprised at an application for the body being made so soon, thinking it hardly possible that he was yet dead. He however sent for the centurion who had the command of the party of executioners, and enquired of him whether Jesus had really been dead some time. Upon finding that this was the case, he desired that the body might be given up to Joseph.

As soon as this permission was granted, Joseph first provided himself with a quantity of linen cloth, proper for wrapping up a corpse, according to the custom of the country ; and then he went to Calvary, where he was joined by another of the rulers of the Jews, who also had been brought to the knowledge of the truth, and was a follower of Jesus Christ. This was Nicodemus, who three years before had come to Jesus by night, and had then received instruction which had been effectually applied in his heart. (John iii.) Nicodemus now brought a large quantity (about an hundred pound weight) of the spices, and other things used by the Jews in the burial of their dead. The two together carefully took down the body of Jesus from the cross, and rolled it up in the linen, with the spices between each fold.

Near to Calvary, there was a garden which belonged to Joseph, in which he had prepared a tomb, with the intention of having his own remains buried there, when he should die. It was a cave cut out of the solid rock, and no corpse had ever yet been placed in it. There was no time to carry the body of Jesus far, as the sabbath was now quite at hand ; and therefore Joseph and Nicodemus took the corpse, and laid it in this new tomb. They then rolled a great stone that lay at hand to the door of the cave, so as to close it up ; and having thus secured it, at least during the sabbath, they went away.

The women who had watched at the death of Jesus, were watching also at his hasty burial. They saw the imperfect manner in which this ceremony was performed (for the proper mode of embalming a dead body amongst the Jews, required much more than had been done by Joseph and Nicodemus) and they determined to take the first opportunity, after the Sabbath was over, to complete the work of respectful attention to the corpse, to which a feeling of much importance was always attached. Some of the women, as soon as they saw what was done with the body, went at once to get ready the spices and ointments before the sabbath began ; and having occupied themselves in this manner until six o'clock, they laid by their work, that they might not break the fourth commandment. Mary Magdalene however, and Mary the mother of Joses, could not leave the sacred spot so soon. They waited until they saw Joseph and Nicodemus finish the burying, and roll the stone to the mouth of the cave ; and then it was too late for them to do any thing more that day, for the sabbath was about to begin.

## V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

## VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. Both Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus had long been disciples of Jesus in their hearts ; but the influence of the world, and the fear of the consequences of professing to be christians, had kept them back from following him openly. Yet when the persecution against our Lord had come to such a pass, that his enemies had succeeded in procuring his death, their feeling for him overcame their fear for themselves ; and they came forward publicly, in such a manner as must have compromised them as his disciples. This shewed the reality of their faith and love ; and proved that it had been gradually overcoming the worldly principle within them. How many are there in the present day who stand in the same situation as these two Jewish councillors !—who have found out indeed that the Scriptures are true, and that Jesus is the only Saviour, but the fear of the world is struggling within them to overcome the principle of faith ! What is wanting, is a deeper view of the sufferings of Christ for our sins ; this will give them courage to overcome all their hindrances. Let them look more earnestly to Christ upon the cross, let them consider more attentively his agony for them ; and they will acquire a boldness sufficient to enable them to make that open profession which is absolutely necessary ; “for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (Rom. x. 10.)

## QUESTIONS.

Does my outward acknowledgment of Christ, and my open



profession of religion, fall short of my inward conviction that He is my Saviour?

Do I meditate upon his sufferings for sin, in order to gain courage to confess his name before the world?

2. The persevering affection of the women stands in beautiful contrast with the conduct of his other followers. While his Apostles forsook him and fled, and Joseph and Nicodemus were only urged on by his last extremity to shew themselves as His friends; these weak and unprotected women, having followed him from Galilee, and attended upon him with self-denying care, seemed to forget all the natural fears of their sex in the one thought of the sufferings of their Lord. They lingered to the very last with his precious remains; and then only left him to occupy themselves in honouring him the more. How touchingly does this conduct illustrate the declaration of the Apostle, "when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.) A sense of weakness, which is so complete as to take off our thoughts entirely from ourselves, will enable us to look to Christ, with an attention as engrossing as that of these women; and will keep us with Him to the end, without fear or failure.

Observe also the consistent piety of these women. They had the strongest sense of the importance of the work they were about, for the due honour of Christ's burial. Yet their respect for the commandment of God restrained them, even from this work, on the sabbath-day. There is scarcely a more powerful test of a really advanced stage in spiritual life, than the tone of jealous feeling, with which it is a good sign when the many excuses which suggest themselves to

justify various employments upon the Lord's day are watched against in the heart. And it would be well if each of us were to establish a private rule, never to engage in any occupations upon that day, except such as we believe would have been considered by the two Maries as more pressing and important than that of preparation for the embalming of Jesus's body.

#### QUESTIONS.

When it happens to be in my power to do anything by which Christ may be honoured, does the thought of self make me weak in the work ? or does forgetfulness of self tend to make me strong to do more than I could have imagined ?

What is my standard regarding Sunday occupations ? Does it easily tolerate works that seem in any degree religious ? or do I rather require a really spiritual object, or a strong necessity, to justify any thing as a Sunday occupation ?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray to be raised above the danger of being ashamed of Christ through worldly fear.
2. Pray for the strength which results from the forgetfulness of self, and the hearty desire to honour Christ.
3. Pray for a spiritual understanding of Sabbath duties.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Lord God, who art above all, and before whom all men are as nothing, grant that I may rise above the snares which are caused by the fear of men. Oh let me never be ashamed of thee, how great or how powerful soever may be those who would sneer at me for my religion. (2) Teach me to forget myself, in the remembrance of the Lord Jesus and of his sufferings for me ; and out of my own weakness make me strong in doing all things that honor Him. (3) Enlighten me to know what works will best honor him upon his own day ; and enable me so to arrange my duties, as to follow not my own will, but His upon that holy day. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

## TWO HUNDRED &amp; FOURTH PORTION.

The watch set.

PLACE.—*The Sepulchre, near Calvary.*

TIME.—*Friday evening, the 5th of April.—Year 30.*

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## I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxvii. v. 62 to 66.

## III. THE MEANINGS;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

At six o'clock on the evening of Friday the rest of the Jewish sabbath began. The disciples of Jesus were resting according to the commandment. The chief priests and Pharisees were also observing its outward form; but their minds could not rest, while they remembered how Jesus had foretold that he would rise from the dead the third day. Much as they seemed to despise him, they could not treat his words with real contempt; for in spite of themselves, they must have felt that there was a divine power in them. A number of the members of the council had determined to take every possible precaution against whatever might happen: and therefore, although it was the sabbath day, they went to the Roman governor, and told him that Jesus, before his death, had said that in three days he would rise again. We may fairly conclude from this, that while the

council had been receiving the testimony of those witnesses who had attempted to pervert the saying of our Lord, about destroying the temple and building it in three days, those who sat in judgment upon him were fully aware of the true meaning of his words, even at the time they were attempting to condemn him for making use of them in a different sense. Acting now upon the true meaning of these words, the chief priests asked Pilate to give orders that the tomb, in which our Lord's body had been placed, might be safely guarded until the third day should have been passed; for fear any of his disciples should come in the night-time, and take away the body, pretending that he had risen from the dead: by which means his claim to be the Christ might be made even more powerful through his death than through his life; and so, as the Pharisees said, "the last error would be worse than the first."

Pilate told the chief priests that there was already a guard of soldiers at their disposal, to enable them to keep due order in the Temple and the courts of justice: they might use as many of these soldiers as they chose, to watch the sepulchre in the safest manner. They acted at once upon this suggestion, and in the course of the sabbath they posted a guard over the tomb where the body of Jesus lay; having first fastened a piece of rope with a seal to the rock, and then fastened the other end also with a seal to the great stone that covered the mouth of the cave. These seals had a particular impression; so that if any person had taken away the stone from the rock and put it back again, it must have been known, because the seal could not have been replaced.

## V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture, See No. II

## VI. THE APPLICATION.

Even where the word of Christ is practically rejected, there is oftentimes an unintentional respect for it; which is shewn by an attempt to attend to it wherever it does not thwart men's self-will. When however it stands in the way of that course which the heart has determined to take, the ear is deaf to its true meaning, and the tongue is willing to adopt a perverted sense for the plainest expressions. This was shewn when the Pharisees acted upon one meaning of our Lord's words at one time, while they were willing to consider the same words in a different sense, when it answered their purpose better. If we were to watch our hearts very narrowly, we should often detect a tendency to the same kind of inconsistency, which requires to be well guarded against; and in the conduct of the world the most glaring instances of willing perversion of Scripture, accompanied often by an unwilling attention to the truths it contains, force themselves upon our notice.

The acknowledgment made by the chief priests upon this occasion, that "the last error would be worse than the first," shews how strongly the great facts of Christ's resurrection establish the truth of the doctrine he preached during his whole life. The resurrection is the great argument always brought forward by the Apostles to prove the truth which they preached; and whenever this fact is received, a full faith in Christ may be expected to be produced. Unbelievers in the present day, when off their guard, very frequently admit for

one object arguments which ought to influence them for another; and such admissions will be terrible witnesses against them in the day when all things shall be rightly judged.

QUESTIONS.

Have I ever acted against any one upon a wrong sense of his words, while I knew or suspected that they had another meaning? Am I sensible of the deceit and wickedness of such conduct?

Do I ever strive to hinder and seal up an argument which I feel will be against my own object, without a full and fair examination?

VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

Pray for simplicity and single-heartedness in endeavouring to discover and bring forth the truth, whether it be for or against your own view.

VIII. THE PRAYER.

O God of truth, who searchest all hearts, and from whom no secrets are hid; be pleased to bestow upon me the spirit of simplicity and godly sincerity, that I may never take advantage of another's mistake or ignorance, to further any selfish design; but keep me upright in all my ways. Help me to search for and discover thy truth, whether it favour my own desires or not; and enable me ever to follow the same. Let thy name be glorified in and by me, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

## TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTH PORTION.

The Resurrection.—*Miracle, No. 42.*

PLACE.—*The Sepulchre, near Calvary.*

TIME.—*Sunday morning, the 7th of April.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxviii. ver. 1 to 8.

St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xvi. ver. 1 to 8.

St. John's Gospel, chap. xx. ver. 1, 2.

## III. THE MEANINGS;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

Mark xvi. verse

1. anoint him *means here* embalm him, or rub with ointment, &c., in order to preserve the body

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

We have come now to the all-important fact of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ: concerning which it will be necessary carefully to examine the four different Gospels, and to compare with great care the several circumstances related in each, that we may find out the right order in which the events happened. This has given much trouble to the learned, and occasioned some variety of opinion amongst them; not however on any point of essential importance. In order the better to understand the course of the

events connected with our Lord's resurrection, it must be remembered that at the moment of his death a number of women were watching the cross; and that, while "many others who had come up with him to Jerusalem" are said to have been there, the names of Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome" are particularly mentioned. (Mark xv. 40, 41. See page 230.) These three are pointed out as those who had attended upon him in Galilee; and are spoken of afterwards as having observed the hasty wrapping up of the Lord's body, and his burial in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathæa; and, having marked the spot, they went home to make proper preparation for the more complete embalming of the corpse. During the Sabbath they rested, according to the commandment. (Mark xv. 47. Luke xxiii. 55, 56. See page 243.)

The Jewish sabbath began at six o'clock on Friday evening, and ended at the same hour on Saturday evening; but as at that hour it was dark, the women did not return to Calvary until the following (Sunday) morning, when the two Marys and Salome set forth before light, and at the earliest dawn of the day approached the sepulchre, where they had seen the Lord's body laid on the Friday evening before. It was yet twilight when they came near, bringing with them the sweet spices with which they meant to embalm the body; and they were consulting together how they should manage to remove the heavy stone, which they had seen Joseph and Nicodemus roll to the mouth of the cave. Just before this, however, the Lord Jesus had risen out of the grave. This event had been accompanied by a great



earthquake, similar to that which had occurred at his death (Matt. xxvii. 51); and an angel had come down from heaven, and rolled back the stone from the mouth of the cave. In doing this, he took a visible form, and sat down upon the stone when he had moved it. His appearance was as bright as lightning, and his dress perfectly white like snow. The sight of this angel made the Roman soldiers who were keeping guard tremble in great alarm, and at last swoon away.

In must have been something of this sight which the three women saw from a distance in the twilight, as they were coming to the tomb. They must have been near enough to perceive that the stone had been moved from the mouth of the cave; for one of them, Mary Magdalene, did not wait to ascertain the particulars, but immediately turned back and ran with all speed to find Peter and John, and to tell them that somebody had removed the body of the Lord, and they did not know where it was taken to.

The other Mary, with Salome, proceeded on to examine the sepulchre. They were awe-struck at the presence of the angel; but he spoke to them and bid them not be alarmed, for he knew (he said) that they had come in search of the body of the crucified Jesus. He told them that it was not in the tomb, for that Jesus had risen from the grave, as he had before declared that he would (Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 9, 23; xx. 19; xxvi. 31, 32); and he bid them go in, and search the place where the body had lain. And when they had done this, they were to go immediately and tell the disciples, that the Lord Jesus had come to life again; and that He appointed them to meet Him in Galilee.

Upon this, the two women went into the sepulchre ; where they saw another angel having the appearance of a young man, dressed in a long flowing-white robe, and sitting on the right hand side of the cave. He told them not to be frightened ; observing (as the other angel had done) that they were looking for the crucified Jesus of Nazareth—that the Lord had risen from death, and was not there ; and he bid them look at the spot where his body had been placed. This angel then repeated the message for the disciples of Jesus, which had been given by the former angel. In this message he mentioned Peter in particular, desiring the women to tell him especially, as well as the others ; and in stating the appointment to meet the Lord in Galilee, he added the remembrance that Jesus had previously promised to meet them there after his resurrection. (Mark xiv. 28.)

As soon as Mary and Salome had received this message from the angel within the tomb, they hastened away, trembling with wonder mixed with joyful fear ; they ran as fast as they could to find the disciples, and deliver their message to *them*, taking care however to say nothing to any body but to the disciples ; being afraid to tell what had happened to those who were not interested in Jesus.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the great fact to which the Apostles afterwards

appealed, for establishing the certain truth of all that He had taught. (Acts ii. 24, 31, 32 ; iii. 15 ; v. 40—42 ; xiii. 34—37 ; xvii. 3, 18, 31, 32.) It sets the seal upon the ministry of Jesus, as being indeed the Son of God, which he declared himself to be ; and also as ensuring the future resurrection of his people, according to his promise. It gives a stamp of reality to the christian's hope of the future life ; and, while it shews that he truly died for sin, it proves his victory over death, and takes away its power to alarm those who are true followers of Jesus. As he was "delivered for our offences," so he "rose again for our justification ;" and it is of the greatest importance to the progress of christian life within us, that we should fully and habitually realize the certainty of this glorious truth : there is no point upon which a christian can more profitably dwell, for the establishing of his faith, and the strengthening of his hope for eternity, than the fact of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead.

## QUESTIONS.

Have I a clear notion of the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ, having truly died, rose again from death, and took his body from the grave ?

What effect has the belief of this fact upon me ?

Do I dwell upon the thought of this truth, and with what degree of spiritual profit ?

2. We have already seen some affecting proofs of self-denying love, in those women who had devoted themselves to attend upon the Lord Jesus (see portion 201, page 230) ; and here we have another instance of their perseverance in that affection, shewn by every means in their power. The conduct of these women (and of those of

whom we shall afterwards hear) should stir us up to be very diligent in giving every active proof of love to our Lord, which circumstances may place within our power. When we happen to be amongst those with whom the name of the Saviour is as it were dead and buried, by being lain aside and forgotten, we may follow the example of these women, by striving to embalm and preserve the respectful remembrance of his name, even where we do not expect to find a living principle of christian life in the company amongst whom we are. Those who act thus will often be surprised at discovering that the Spirit of Jesus is alive in some heart where they only expected to find a dead and formal religion.

#### QUESTIONS.

What tokens have I that my affection for the Lord Jesus is self-denying and unwearied?

Am I upon the watch to give due honour to the name of Jesus whenever I am in the company of those from whom I expect nothing but a formal profession?

3. Mention is made in this portion of the fear which was felt by different persons, at the sight of the heavenly messengers. The keepers at the tomb shook for fear, and became as dead men: the women too who had come to find his body "were affrighted;" but the angels bid them not to fear, for they were seeking Jesus. The same difference of feeling may still be observed in different classes. Those who keep a bare remembrance of the facts connected with religion in saying the Creed, while they love the world, and oppose the expression of spiritual life in others, may be called like the keepers of the dead body of Jesus. These always feel alarm at the approach of any thing which seriously reminds them

of heaven and of hell ; while those who, however ignorantly, are yet truly seeking Jesus, feel indeed a solemn fear at the thought of heavenly realities, but without any such distress as makes them like dead men. Every part of the Bible conveys to them the comfortable assurance that they need not fear, because He whom they seek, having risen from the dead, is at the right hand of the Father, where he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

## QUESTIONS.

What is the nature of my feelings, when anything excites a lively sense of eternal and heavenly things ?

Am I distressingly alarmed, and strive to avoid the subject ? Or am I seriously impressed, my fear being mixed with joy ?

4. An important lesson may be learned from the particular mention of Peter's name, in the message sent by the angel to the disciples. The last intercourse between Jesus and Peter had been by means of that piercing look, which made the sinful Apostle hide his head and weep bitterly, after his aggravated denial of his Master. It was needful then to assure Peter in some particular manner, that when the disciples were called to meet the Lord, he was included amongst them. And every one who has felt the sinfulness of his own particular sins must desire to receive some encouraging token that Jesus is willing that he should be amongst the number whom He invites. Such an encouragement however is given, when we are informed that the Lord Jesus "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. ix. 13) ; and every one who is disposed to hide his head like Peter at the thought of the look of Jesus may feel that he receives a particular

invitation from that merciful Saviour who said, "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you." (Matt. xi. 28.)

#### QUESTIONS.

Have I felt the sinfulness and burthen of my own sins particularly?

Does it make me seek for the special application of the Gospel to my own case?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray that the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ may have its full effect upon your mind now, and upon your salvation hereafter.

2. Pray that your love to Christ may make you diligent and persevering in preserving the respect due to his holy name amongst all companies.

3. Pray that you may ever have that holy reverence connected with all spiritual things, which is the result of the mixture of fear and joy.

4. Pray for deeper conviction of sin, and a personal application of the gospel to your own case.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Gracious Saviour, who wast delivered for my offences, and raised again for my justification, mercifully grant that I may receive the full benefit of thy glorious resurrection, that the faith of it may impart comfort and strength to my soul while I am in this life, and that its power may raise me to the life eternal with thyself. (2) Shed thy love abroad in my heart, that it may be an active principle of duty in me, and may inspire me with unceasing diligence in striving to make thy name honoured among all men. (3) Join to that love in me such holy reverence for thy name, and such a solemn sense of thy majesty and power, as may make every remembrance of thee bring forth the fruit of godly fear and heavenly joy.

(4) Make me to know mine own unworthiness, and impress me with a deeper sense of the sinfulness of my own sins, that I may seek more earnestly for thy salvation in the Gospel; and do thou, O merciful Saviour, apply thy message of peace personally to my own soul, by thy comforting Spirit. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

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## TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTH PORTION.

The watch suborned.

PLACE.—*In the city of Jerusalem.* TIME.—*The morning of Sunday the 7th of April.*—Year 30.

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### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxviii. v. 11 to 15.

### III. THE MEANINGS;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

As the two women left the sepulchre, the Roman soldiers, who had been keeping guard there, recovered from their fright, and some of them went at once into Jerusalem to find out the chief priests, from whom they had received their orders to watch the tomb. They told them what had happened; and the chief priests immediately proceeded to call the members of the Sanhedrim

together. The whole counsel then consulted what was to be done under the circumstances ; and they determined to bribe the soldiers to tell a false story concerning what they had seen. Accordingly they gave the men a great deal of money (as much as would satisfy them), and desired them to spread about, that the disciples of Jesus had come in the night-time, and contrived to get the body away while the sentries were asleep. As it would have been justly considered a great offence for a soldier to have slept while keeping guard, the Jewish counsellors told the men whom they were bribing, that if Pilate should ever hear what was said about the body of Jesus being thus stolen, they would undertake to manage matters with him, so that the soldiers need be in no care about it.

The soldiers received the money, and followed the instructions given them ; and in consequence the report, that the body of Jesus had been stolen in the night by his disciples, became generally spoken of amongst the Jews, and continued to be currently believed amongst them at the time St. Matthew wrote his Gospel ; that is, for about twenty-four years after the resurrection of our Lord.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture. See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

We have in this portion an account of the way in which the false report began concerning the removal of the body of Jesus. Couniving enemies invented the lie, and managed so as to make it the interest of others to support it. It was planned for the purpose of hiding the sin of the chief



priests, who would have been convicted of having procured the death of Christ unjustly, had his resurrection afforded the proof that he was indeed the person he professed to be. And similar to this is the usual history of the greater number of false reports against christians. Some plain token of christian holiness would disprove the previous spiteful opinions of some wordly opposer; who therefore sets forward a false account of the christian's conduct, misrepresented in such a way as bribes other worldlings to carry on the story. And so it goes from mouth to mouth: while, if any one traces it back to endeavour to ascertain the truth, the author of the misrepresentation has his arguments ready to "persuade" the inquirer, and "secure" the reporters. Without supposing that we may be the inventors of such a falsehood, it would be well if, in applying this passage, we should be made more watchful against the danger of becoming instrumental in carrying on false reports against Christians; a danger which is the greater, because the hidden pride of human nature is often secretly wounded by the greater holiness of some against whom we hear a story of inconsistency; and this wounded pride within us may be said to offer us a bribe for repeating what we hear, while the thought that we did not invent it seems to secure us an excuse, if the story should turn out to be untrue. It is, however, the office of christian love not to expose, but to "cover the multitude of sins" (1 Pet. iv. 8. 1 Cor. xiii. 6, 7), even where the report against a christian should be true: how much more would christian love lead us to be silent, under the hope that such a report may turn out to be false. (Jer. xx. 10.)

## QUESTIONS.

Have I ever felt desirous of making any incorrect statement of facts which have come to my ears concerning any christian? And how have I acted if thus tempted?

What is my custom when I hear reports of inconsistencies stated against christians? Do I speak of them again to others?

If my custom be *not* so to speak, in what instances have I acted otherwise? and why?

Have these exceptions been when circumstances tending to my personal advantage have tempted me to tell what I have heard?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray that you may have the charity which covereth a multitude of sins, even when you know them to exist.

2. Pray to be preserved from the sin of carrying reports to the hurt of others, though it may gratify yourself.

## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O gracious God, who knowest all things; there is not a word of my tongue, nor a thought of my heart, but thou knowest it altogether; give me that spirit of love which shall prevent me from thinking or wishing evil of others, and by which I may constantly desire to cover from the world the transgressions of those who profess thy name.

(2) Restrain me from giving way to the readiness of an idle tongue, that I may never convey a false report; and make me to love the truth in charity to all men, and for the glory of the name of Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

## TWO HUNDRED &amp; SEVENTH PORTION.

Johanna's party at the tomb.

PLACE.—*The Sepulchre near Calvary.* TIME.—*Sunday morning, 7th April.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER

MAY God, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. Luke's Gospel, chap. xxiv. ver. 1 to 9.

## III. THE MEANINGS ;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

Besides the three women, of whose pious care to pay due respect to the corpse of their Lord we have already heard, there were others who had the same intention, and had been occupied since his death in like manner, in making preparation for embalming the body. Of these other women the name of one only is mentioned by St. Luke, chap. xxiv. verse 10 ; where he says that Johanna (Luke viii. 3) was amongst those who, as well as the two Marys, had reported what they had seen to the Apostles. As we learn from St. Matthew and St. Mark that the party of women, whom we have already heard of as going to the Sepulchre, consisted only of the two Marys, with Salome ; so now we are told by St. Luke that the women “ which came with him from Galilee ” (xxiii. 55), and who had gone home and prepared their spices and ointments at once, went also to the sepulchre very early on the Sunday morning, in order to apply them to the body of Jesus. Johanna must

have been amongst these, as he afterwards mentions her report : we will therefore refer to this visit to the tomb as made by the party of Johanna.

This party of women must have arrived at the sepulchre, very soon after Mary and Salome had left it ; for the first party had approached the tomb “ when it was yet dark ” (John xx. 1), at which time Mary Magdalene had turned back ; and what took place afterwards is described as happening “ as it began to dawn ” (Matt. xxviii. 1), and “ at the rising of the sun ” (Mark xvi. 2) : and Johanna’s party of women are stated to have gone to the sepulchre “ very early in the morning ” (Luke xxiv. 1) ; so that the first party must have left the tomb but a very little while before the second party arrived.

This second party brought with them a quantity of spices, for the same purpose as the others had ; and when the women with Johanna arrived, they found the tomb in the condition in which it had been left by Mary and Salome—the stone, having been rolled away from the mouth of the cave, was lying on one side, but the soldiers had gone away into the city (as was explained in the last portion) and the angels were no longer visible. The women went at once into the open sepulchre, and looked about in vain for the corpse which they had expected to see there : not finding it, they were in the greatest distress and confusion of mind. While they were in this condition, two angels (which the former women had seen separately, one outside and one within the tomb) appeared to these women together, taking the form of men, standing by them in dresses shining with light. The women were in great alarm, and cast them-

selves down with their faces to the ground ; while the angels asked them why they were looking for the living one amongst the dead—Jesus was not there, but had taken his body and risen from the grave ;—did they not recollect what He had himself told them, before he left Galilee, upon his last journey to Jerusalem (Matt. xvii. 22, 23. Mark ix. 10—32 ; see portion 103, vol. iii., page 243), when he said “ The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again ? ”

Upon hearing this gentle reproof from the angels, the women called to mind the words which our Lord had spoken at the time alluded to. They then left the sepulchre, and lost no time in telling what they had seen and heard to the Apostles, and the other disciples.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture, See No. II

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

The women of Johanna's party suggest to us the same application as did the party of Salome and the two Marys, by the earnest perseverance of their pious desire to do honour to their Lord. (See page 255.) The perplexity of this second party of women, however, is pointed out more specially ; and afterwards we may gather its connection with their forgetfulness of the Lord's words, which they ought to have remembered. In reflecting on some point of important doctrine, the minds of pious persons are often confused and perplexed, because they do not recollect those passages of Scripture which would have cleared away all their difficulties, had they been properly applied at the time they were read. The lessons

in the Church Services, and the Sermons of the preachers, too often pass over the minds of hearers just as our Lord's words in Galilee did over the ears of these women. There was no present attention and personal application, which could recal the word at once, when the thing referred to actually occurred: and for want of these, the Scripture read, and the doctrine taught, produce no impression on us; and it requires perhaps that some providential circumstance should bring practically and alarmingly before our eyes the truth we have often heard, before we "remember the words," so as to profit by them.

#### QUESTIONS.

Am I perplexed concerning any important doctrine of the Bible?

If so, do I remember to apply to the subject the portions of Scripture which have occurred in my general reading?

With what degree of attention do I read the Scriptures, or hear Sermons?

Do I ever let pass various portions which I seem to read or hear while my mind is occupied on other matters, and gathers no thoughts which might enable me to remember the instruction given?

#### VII. HEAD FOR PRAYER.

Pray for grace to give a due attention to all you read in the Scriptures, so that you may profit by the word of God at the time, and remember to apply it properly afterwards.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that I may in such wise read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy Holy Word, I may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, and that I may remember the power of its truth by duly applying it at all times, to the glory of the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

## TWO HUNDRED &amp; EIGHTH PORTION.

The visit of Peter and John to the tomb.

PLACE.—*The Sepulchre near Calvary.* TIME.—*Sunday morning, 7th April.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER

MAY God, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Luke's Gospel, c. xxiv. ver. 10 to 12.

St. John's Gospel, chap. xx. ver. 3 to 10.

## III. THE MEANINGS ;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

It has already been seen from the account given by St. John (xx. 1, 2 ; which was explained in portion 205, page 253), that Mary Magdalene had been the first person to give information to Peter and John, that the body of the Lord Jesus had been taken away from the sepulchre. St. Luke states the same thing, when he mentions altogether the company of women, who had informed the apostles in general ; while he says also, that the reports made to them by the several parties had been received as idle tales not worth attending to. It seems however that the two different parties of women, who had visited the tomb one after another, must have given their several accounts at different times ; and both of them *after* Mary Magdalene had given her account to Peter and John, when she ran back in consequence of seeing

the mouth of the cave open, as she approached it with the other Mary and Salome.

When Mary Magdalene had told her story to Peter and John, they both set out at once to go and see for themselves, and Mary followed them. It is very probable, that these two disciples had taken up their abode in Bethany, where our Lord had lodged during the week before his crucifixion ; and if this be the case, they must have had full two miles and a half to go, in order to reach Calvary : for Bethany was a mile and a half from the eastern gate of Jerusalem ; and from that gate across the city, and out of the western gate to Calvary, was a full mile more. This will account for the time, during which the circumstances already recorded of the two visits to the tomb took place, after Mary Magdalene had left the other women, and before she returned with Peter and John. These both made the best haste they could in running to the sepulchre, and John (being the younger) got there before Peter. He paused at the mouth of the cave ; and stooping to look into it, he perceived the linen cloth, in which Joseph had wrapped the body, lying on one side of the cave, as if it had been thrown off. (Matt. xxvii. 50, &c. See portion 205, page 252.) He waited till Peter came up ; and as that apostle went straight into the sepulchre, John followed him. There they saw the wrapper which had been round the dead body of our Lord in one place, and the napkin with which his head had been bound up lying in another place, folded up by itself. When John saw the tomb in this state, he believed the account which Mary had given them, that the Lord's body had been removed by his



enemies ; for before this they were not enlightened to understand those Scriptures of the Old Testament, which refer to the Messiah's living again after death. (Psa. xvi. 10. Isa. xxv. 8 ; xxvi. 19 ; liii. 10, 12. Hosea xiii. 14.) When the two disciples had thus satisfied themselves of the truth of Mary Magdalene's report, they came out of the cave, and returned home.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

In the conduct of Peter and John, we have a proof of the earnest affection with which they regarded their Master, as well as of the surprise which shewed how little they had understood his plain statements, that he would rise again from the dead. The difference of character, in manifesting this feeling, is also very evident. John's affection was yet restrained by a sense of awe, which held his feet at the door of the sepulchre ; while on the other hand the boldness of Peter's character carried him straight in, in order to ascertain the truth of what he had heard. Both were unbelieving at the time as to the resurrection of the Lord ; and their conduct therefore was the fruit of natural character, without being directed by the grace which afterwards was given to them. We are especially told that their unbelief arose from their not having sufficiently understood those passages of the Old Testament, in which the resurrection of Christ is spoken of ; while the very first effect produced upon Peter by the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, was to make him explain to the people that passage in the sixteenth Psalm which most strongly declares the

fact. (Psalm xvi. 10. Acts ii. 25—31.) How important it is that we, who live in the days when the Holy Spirit is still abiding with His Church, should strive to attain a full knowledge of the Scriptures; and should constantly pray that the Holy Spirit may lead us into a right understanding of what we know.

#### QUESTIONS.

Is my interest in that which concerns Christ earnest and active?

Does it lead me to enquire concerning the truth of what I hear of him?

Do I make these enquiries with a proper reverence and sense of the seriousness of the subject?

Do I study the Scriptures with constant application?

Do I pray for the Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth concerning them?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for an earnest love of Christ to lead you to a diligent searching of the Scriptures.

2. Pray that the Holy Spirit may guide you in the search.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O gracious God, who hast revealed the truth of thy mercy through Christ in thy holy word, quicken my attention, and enliven my interest concerning him, and all that relates to him; and lead me to search diligently and humbly in thy holy word with due reverence and holy fear. (2) Give me thy Holy Spirit, to guide me into all truth; and let me ever feel that without that Spirit I can do nothing, and know nothing aright; while I rejoice that thou hast promised to give that Holy Spirit as often as I ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

**TWO HUNDRED AND NINTH PORTION.**

Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene.—*Conversation No. 71.*

PLACE.—*At the sepulchre, near Calvary.*

TIME.—*The Morning of Sunday, the 7th of April.—Year 30.*

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**I. BEGINNING PRAYER.**

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

**II. THE SCRIPTURES.**

Read St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xvi. ver. 9 to 11.

St. John's Gospel, chap. xx. ver. 11 to 18.

**III. THE MEANINGS;**

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

**IV. THE EXPLANATION.**

When Peter and John left the sepulchre after ascertaining that the Lord's body was no longer there, Mary Magdalene (who had returned to the tomb with them) remained behind. She had received very special mercy from Jesus, for he had delivered her from the power of seven of the evil spirits by which she had been possessed (Luke viii. 2; see portion 60; vol. ii., page 154); and her heart was so much affected by his death, and by the thought that his body had been taken away by persons who might not treat it with proper respect, as she imagined, that she continued standing outside the cave after the two disciples had gone home. Her tears flowed; and she stooped down to look into the mouth of the cave where the Lord's body had been buried. Here she saw two angels in the same kind of white clothing as those who had shewn themselves to the first party of women. (See page 253.) One was sitting at that part of

the cave where the head of Jesus had lain ; and the other where the feet were placed. They addressed Mary in a kind manner, and asked her, why she was weeping ? She told them the reason—some one had removed the body of her Lord, and she did not know where it had been taken to.

After giving the answer, Mary raised herself from her bending posture, and turned round. She saw a person standing by her, whom she did not know, but who was in reality the Lord Jesus himself. He addressed her in the same words as the angels had already used, asking her why she wept ; and also what she came there to look for. Mary took it for granted, that the person she saw was the man who had charge of the place in which the tomb was, and that he had removed the body from the cave. She therefore begged him, if this were the case, to let her know where the corpse was, that she might go and pay proper attention to it.

Upon this Jesus called her by her name ; and immediately she knew who it was that had spoken to her : she turned round, and exclaimed “ Rabboni !—my Lord and Master.” Our Lord then told her not to cast herself at his feet, or embrace his knees, as she was about to do ; for that he should not yet establish his kingdom in glory, so that his disciples would ever be with Him in the fulness of joy and love :—this they might suppose would follow upon his resurrection ; but he had not yet done all that would be necessary to the great end by his ascending to his Father. But he bid her go at once to his disciples (whom He called brethren) with a message from him ; desiring her to tell them that he was about to go up again into heaven, to be with Him, whom he described as

being the Father both of Himself and of his disciples—both his and their God.

Mary immediately went to carry her message. She came to the place where the disciples of Jesus were found weeping and mourning for their grievous loss ; she told them that she had seen the Lord, and repeated what he had said to her : but they could not give credit to her story ; it seemed to them so impossible that he could have been seen alive again.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures. See No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead in the presence of a large crowd of his enemies, or even of his friends. This might have made his glory more evident to the sight of many people, but it would not have been more calculated to affect their hearts. It seems as though he was pleased to convey the knowledge of his having risen again to his first disciples, in the same manner as he does to the following generations by the publication of the Gospel ; working conviction notwithstanding the natural unbelief of the heart, and not by any sudden outward displays of power, such as which may silence opposers without influencing their hearts : except perhaps it be still more to irritate the angry resistance already to be found there. (Luke xvi. 31.) No human being was present at the first rising of Jesus—angels prepared the minds of the disciples by telling the women what had happened—the unbelief of the apostles was gradually subdued, by their proving that all they could ascertain of the women's report was correct : and then our Lord chose out one who might have been thought the most unlikely of the

women who had followed him—one whom he had taken from a greater degree of sin than others, having cast seven devils from her;—and to this woman he appeared alone, and sent her to carry the tidings of his resurrection, with the most encouraging and affectionate message, to the disciples. Just so has our Lord acted towards *all* his disciples, in sending them the Gospel. He does not make such a display of power before our eyes, as leaves no room for the possibility of objection; which might excite, rather than subdue the natural enmity of our hearts: but having chosen a few weak and unlearned men, some of them of the class least esteemed in society, and cast out as evil, through the written report which they have given of his message, Jesus is pleased to convince the minds and affect the hearts of those who become the true members of His Church. (Acts iv. 13. John xvii. 20. 1 Cor. i. 17—31.) How grateful ought we to be for this condescension, in thus placing within our reach the truth upon which our salvation depends, in the manner most suited to enable it to overcome our natural unbelief, and so to reach our hearts. We should also recollect that, however weak we may be in ourselves, our very weakness may in some way qualify us for being the instruments of conveying to others the knowledge of the resurrection of Christ, and his Gospel.

QUESTIONS.

How have I received the wonderful information of the gospel, concerning the resurrection of Christ and its consequences to my own salvation?

Am I ever hindered, by a sense of my own unfitness, from endeavouring to communicate the knowledge of the gospel to others?

2. There are two points in our Lord's conversation with Mary, which should be of deep interest

to every christian. One is the merciful message sent to the disciples in general. He made use of the strongest language which could be chosen, to express his spiritual connection with his people, and theirs with Him. When he called them his brothers, and spoke of the Almighty as His and their Father, His and their God, he expressed in the fullest manner his entire sympathy with them as a man, even at the very moment that he was about to give a proof of His power as the Son of God. (Heb. ii. 11. Rom. viii. 29. John xvii. 21—23.) And when he told them, that in this brotherly relationship he was about to go up to the right hand of God, he gave them the strongest assurance that they would have a High Priest before the throne on high, through whose intercession they might always come there with confidence. (Heb. iv. 15, 16; vii. 24, 25.)

The other point of special interest to Christians, in this conversation of our Lord, is the manner in which he applied to Mary in particular the love that he expressed to his disciples in general. She did not know him again, until he had called her in an affectionate manner by her name. The calling of any one by name is often used in Scripture, to shew a particular interest and affection toward the person so called. (Is. xliii. 1. John x. 3.) And the salvation of any particular persons is connected with the idea of writing their names in the book of life in heaven. (Phil. iv. 3. Luke x. 20.) In like manner a Christian is one who, by faith, has applied to himself in particular that love of Christ, which is conveyed in the Gospel to his disciples in general. Even though a person may partake of this love in a manner which may at last prove

effectual to his salvation, yet he can hardly be said to possess the full power of that principle of love, proved to him through the resurrection and ascension, until his heart has humbly and joyfully received a sense of Christ's personal affection; like that which Jesus referred to when he said "the shepherd calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out,"—and "the sheep follow him, for they know his voice." (John x. 3, 4.)

#### QUESTIONS.

Do I approach the throne of grace, in the spirit of one who feels that he has a brother there to intercede for him?

Have I realized my personal interest in Christ, and his particular affection for me?

What effect is produced in my prayers, and in my conduct, by my sure conviction on these points?

What effect ought to have been produced in a christian, which I do not find in myself?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for a simple faith in the power of Christ to make the truths of the Gospel useful, even by means of the weak expression which you may be able to give them.

2. Pray for grace to realize the fact that Christ is your brother in heaven, ever living to make intercession for you; and also for courage to take advantage of his mediation.

3. Pray to be blessed with a confident assurance that Christ, has indeed applied the general mercy of his gospel to yourself in particular; and ask for grace to be able to follow him at his call.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O merciful God, whose power is magnified in the weakness of the instruments by which thou art pleased to work, make me to feel that thy message of mercy to sinners does not need man's strength, to make it effectual; but grant, gracious God, that I may ever speak for thy glory, without any hindrance from a sense of my own weakness and unfitness. (2) Make me, O Lord, to know and feel the reality of that blessed mediation of



my merciful Brother, Jesus Christ, at thy throne of grace ; and grant that I may take advantage of his merciful intercession, and feel holy confidence in coming through him to the throne of grace, in every time of need. (3) Comfort me, blessed Jesus, with the full assurance of faith, in applying thy love to my own soul : enable me spiritually to hear thy voice, to know the sound of my own name therein, and to follow thee whithersoever thou leadest me through the trials and temptations of this life, until thou shalt call me to enter into the joy which belongs to Thee my Lord. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

## TWO HUNDRED & TENTH PORTION.

The walk to Emmaus.—*Conversation, No. 72.*

Our Lord's second and third appearances after his Resurrection.

PLACE.—*Emmaus and Jerusalem.* TIME.—*Towards Evening,*  
*Sunday the 7th of April.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xvi. ver. 12, 13.

St. Luke's Gospel, c. xxiv. ver. 13 to 35.

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

Mark xvi. verse

13. the residue *means here* the rest

Luke xxiv. verse

27. expounded..... explained

29. constrained him .... pressed him

31. vanished ..... disappear out of sight

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

The circumstances which have been already related, as happening since six o'clock in the morning of the Sunday which we now call Easter day, must have occupied five or six hours before Mary Magdalene could have returned to the place where Peter and John were, which was probably Bethany. Before she arrived with her report of our Lord's appearance, and his message, two of the disciples, who had been in company with the Apostles, set out to go to the village of Emmaus, which was about seven miles and a half in a direction different from that of Bethany. One of these disciples was Cleopas the husband of that Mary (John xix. 25), who with Salome had been the first to visit the Lord's sepulchre on that morning. (See portion 205, page 252.)

As they walked alone, they naturally conversed together about the matters which interested them so much, and which had just taken place. In the midst of their earnest talk, in which they were helping each other to find out what these things could possibly mean, a man overtook them, and joined company with them. This person was Jesus himself: but the sight of the two disciples was so restrained, that they did not recognize him to be the Lord.

Jesus asked them, what they were talking about in such eager discussion, as they walked along with such disturbed looks. Cleopas replied by asking him, how it could happen that he should be ignorant of the events just happening in Jerusalem, which even a stranger there must surely have heard of. Jesus inquired to what events he alluded. They told him that they meant the cir-

cumstances connected with Jesus of Nazareth, a person who had shewn himself to be a prophet, by the power of his miracles and his instructions, in the sight of God, and publicly before the people. They referred to the conduct of the chief priests, and the council of the Sanhedrim, who had taken him to the Roman governor to be sentenced as a malefactor, and so had procured his crucifixion. They expressed their own disappointment at this, since they had fully hoped that he had been the expected Redeemer of Israel ; and added that moreover it was only three days since all this happened. Nay (what was even more strange) some women, who were disciples, had greatly surprised them ; for they had gone early that morning to the place where the body of Jesus had been buried, and not finding the corpse there, they came back to their companions, telling them that they had seen a vision of angels, who had informed them that Jesus was still alive. Some of the disciples had gone in consequence to the sepulchre, and had found that the body was indeed missing, but they had not seen the Lord alive.

Upon this Jesus reprov'd them, as being thoughtless and inconsiderate in searching the Scriptures, and backward in believing whatever had been foretold by the prophets. If they had rightly understood the prophecies, they might have known that the expected Messiah was to suffer such things as they had spoken of, and through those sufferings to arrive at the promised glory. He then began at the book of Genesis, and proceeding through the other prophecies, he explained to them the things foretold about himself in all the Old Testament.

By this time they came near the village of Em-

maus, where Cleopas and his companion were going (as it appears) to their home. Jesus seemed as though he were going on still further; but they pressed him to stay with them, urging that the evening would soon close in, as the day was declining. It must have been about four in the afternoon by this time. Jesus allowed himself to be persuaded, and going into the house with them, joined in their afternoon meal. While they were eating, the Lord was pleased to administer to them the Holy Supper, which he had appointed on the Thursday before, to stand in the place of the Pass-over. He took the loaf of bread and blessed it, and then breaking it gave a portion to each of the disciples. Upon his doing this, the restraint and hindrance which had been put upon their sight was taken away, and both of them immediately knew that the person before them was the Lord Jesus Christ. As soon however as they knew him, he disappeared from their sight. Cleopas and his companion were at once struck with surprise, that they had not discovered who he was before; and asked each other how it was that they had not known him before, from the powerful way in which his conversation and explanation of the Scriptures had affected their hearts with warmth of feeling, as he had talked with them on their way to Emmaus.

The two disciples immediately rose from table, and lost no time in returning to Jerusalem; where they found the Apostles, who had met together and had been joined by a number of other disciples. They were all conversing concerning the information they had just received, that Jesus was indeed come to life again, and that he had appeared to Simon Peter. The particulars of this

appearance are not given in the Gospels, but in 1 Cor. xv. 5, it is stated that "he was seen of Cephas;" which must refer to this appearance, since no other such is mentioned. The two disciples from Emmaus immediately told what had happened that afternoon on their road, and how they did not know Jesus, until they had discovered him whilst blessing the bread. In spite however of all that had already taken place, the assembled disciples would not give Cleopas and the other credit for what they told them.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scripture, See No. II

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

The two disciples journeying to Emmaus may represent to us many christians who are truly striving to know more about Christ and his Gospel than they have yet understood. This state of mind is very frequent, where the heart is sincere; and is entirely different from that satisfied ignorance, in which vast numbers of professing christians are content to remain. Sincere inquirers, however, are too much interested in the Gospel, to leave the subject alone; and in the course of their ordinary engagements, they are ever ready to talk with others equally interested upon the things of Christ, which are ever uppermost in their thoughts. They may, and indeed will, for some time have very mistaken notions of the subjects which they discuss, just as these disciples had in their conversation, during their walk; and, like them, they may be much disappointed at the apparent failure in some of their expectations: but their sincerity will produce a real seriousness, and an earnestness of feeling and manner. To persons in such a state of mind, the Lord Jesus Christ will be sure to give

such necessary assistance, as will gradually bring them to a clearer understanding of christian truth. And as he walked and conversed for some time with the disciples, without their knowing him, so His Spirit speaks to such inquiring christians, through many outward means, in which they do not at first perceive that He is present.

The Lord's mode of proceeding in such cases is generally the same: he leads the mind to find out distinctly what its own views are, and then draws them to the Scriptures; where upon every serious search they find more and more, what little consideration they have really given to many parts which they thought they knew very well—how foolish have been their carelessness and misapprehension—and how backward their hearts have been to receive as true the wonderful things which the Bible declares of Christ, and of his salvation. The more they are led to search in this serious state of mind, the more light is cast by the Spirit of Christ, to explain to them the word of God; the more are they enabled to see the Saviour in every part of the Scriptures,—in the Old Testament and in the New,—in Moses and the Prophets, as well as in the Gospels and Epistles. Christ in his humiliation, and Christ in his future glory, every where rises up before them in a more plain and perfect manner, through their conversation and their reading: and the Spirit of Christ, without being distinctly perceived, is nevertheless felt in that glow of heart which results from the striking convictions of truth, and which He alone can produce.

But this burning of heart while searching the Scriptures is often felt by the christian, before he has been able plainly to perceive that he is blessed with a presence of the Spirit of Christ. And after

some testing of the heart (in order to prove whether it is really anxious to retain the Holy Spirit of Christ, when he seems as if he would pass away), the christian is blessed with plainer manifestations of the love of Jesus, and of His presence in his heart. Perhaps this is given, while the humble christian is faithfully partaking of the Lord's Supper,—that sacred pledge to his people; in which the sincere believer may hope to find, that Jesus will in an especial manner make his presence to be felt in the heart.

When such spiritual mercies are afforded to sincere and humble-minded persons who have been searching after the truth as it is in Jesus, they cannot restrain the desire to tell of the mercies they have received: and as the disciples rose up at once, to let their brethren at Jerusalem know that they had seen the Lord, so these speak to other christians of the spiritual feelings which have so encouraged them; and find in return that it is not to them alone, but to others also, that the Lord makes himself known.

#### QUESTIONS.

What are my notions concerning Christ and his salvation? Are they clear? are they Scriptural? Have I proved them to be so?

Does the subject dwell much on my thoughts? do I speak of it to others, often and with interest?

Do I realize the promise that the Spirit of Christ will be present also, where even two are together engaged in religious intercourse in His name?

Do I find that all Scripture testifies to me of Christ, whether it be the Old Testament or the New?

Do I seek for the aid of His Holy Spirit, to instruct me in the Scriptures?

With what expectation do I receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper? Is it with the hope of finding Christ a blessing to my own soul personally?

Have I the comfortable assurance of Christ's presence with me spiritually?

Does this assurance lead me, upon proper occasions, to give vent to my feelings of gratitude and wonder amongst other Christians?

#### VII. HEAD FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray to have such a lively interest in every thing that relates to Christ and His salvation, that you may be led to inquire and converse much on the subject.

2. Pray that the Spirit of Christ may be present with you, and guide you into all truth, in reading the Scriptures.

3. Pray that you may have a faithful sense of Christ's spiritual presence with you, in partaking of the Lord's Supper; and that your gratitude may be manifest in your life and conversation.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O gracious God, who quickenest those who are dead in sin, and who art the author of every good thing in the hearts of thy people, give me thy grace that I may be so deeply impressed with a sense of thy love in Christ Jesus, that every thing that tells of him may engage my liveliest interest, such as may be discovered in my constant conversation with others. (2) May the Holy Spirit of Christ ever be present with me, and guide me according to his promise into all truth; by taking of the things of Christ, and shewing them to my heart, whilst teaching me to understand the Scriptures. (3) Be present with me, Lord Jesus, I beseech thee; and comfort me with the assurance, that thou art with me. Specially grant, that I may always approach thy holy Table so humbly and so faithfully, that thy presence with me may be manifest to my own heart; and give me grace to tell of thy mercies towards me in the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, to the glory of thy holy name. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.



## TWO HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH PORTION.

Jesus appears to the disciples twice.—His fourth and fifth appearances.—*Conv. No. 73, 74. Miracles, No. 44, 45.*

PLACE.—*Jerusalem.* TIME.—*The evening of Sunday, the 7th April; and on Sunday, the 14th April.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Luke's Gospel, c. xxiv. ver. 36 to 43.

St. John's Gospel, chap. xx. ver. 19 to 29.

St. Mark's Gospel, chap. xvi. ver. 14.

### III. THE MEANINGS;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

LUKE xxiv. verse

37. a spirit *means here* a ghost

41. meat ..... food

JOHN xx. verse

23. remit ..... let pass

retain ..... keep

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

It was evening by the time that the two disciples were returned from Emmaus to Jerusalem, bringing word to their friends that they had seen the Lord alive; as was explained in the last portion. In consequence of the violent conduct of the Jews against Jesus, his followers had taken care to fasten the doors of the place where they met together, lest they should be suddenly interrupted by their enemies. In spite however of this, while they were earnestly conversing about

the report now made to them by Cleopas and his companion, Jesus himself appeared amongst them, and immediately gave them his blessing, saying, "Peace be unto you."

The disciples were greatly alarmed, imagining that what they saw was a ghost; but he kindly encouraged them, asking them why they were agitated, and perplexed by such imaginations. He bid them observe the wounds, which had been made in his hands and feet by the nails on the cross, in order to assure themselves that he was indeed the very Jesus who had been crucified; and stretching out his hands, he invited them to touch them, and so become satisfied that it was a real body which was before them; for a mere ghost or phantom could not have the substance of flesh and bones, such as they might convince themselves that he had. And with this, he made them observe those wounds, and also that other made by the soldier in his side after his death.

Being thus reassured, the alarm of the disciples began to give way to the feeling of joy at again beholding their Lord; but yet this very feeling, joined with their astonishment, helped to confuse their minds, and they could not believe the reality of what they saw. Jesus however condescended yet further, in order to convince them. He inquired, whether they had any thing to eat at hand. They had probably just partaken of their evening meal; and there was the remains of a broiled fish and some honeycomb in the room. These they offered him, and he ate some of them.

Having thus satisfied the wondering disciples of the truth of his appearance, he repeated the blessing which he had spoken upon first entering the

room,—“Peace be unto you.” Then he stated to them the great commission with which he charged them, and which he had made a subject of his prayer in the supper-chamber four days before (John xvii. 18): that in the same manner as God the Father had sent him amongst the people of the world, so also he sent them amongst the world. He then said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost;” and accompanied these solemn words with a significant action, by breathing upon the apostles; adding a declaration, that the sins of those who should receive the gospel under the great commission he gave to his apostles, shall be forgiven according to that gospel which they convey; and that according to the terms of the same gospel the sins of those who reject it, shall remain to be charged against themselves. (1 Cor. xv. 17. John iii. 18, 19. Rom. viii. 9.)

As the words of our Lord upon this occasion have been taken by the papists to mean much more than is stated in this explanation, it may be well to observe, that Jesus seems here to make a distinct reference to the words which he had already used upon two occasions; first to Peter, when in the name of all the Apostles he made the confession of faith in Jesus as the Christ (Matt. xvi. 16—19. See portion 98); and afterwards to all the Apostles, when he was explaining to them the mode in which the body of christians were to excommunicate an offending brother. (Matt. xviii. 18. See portion 108.) The language upon both those occasions conveys the same meaning as that which he used now: he then said, “whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be

loosed in heaven ;" he now says " whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." It is very important to remark this ; for the explanation of those former statements may help us to understand the present. We have seen the meaning of what Jesus then said to his Apostles ; that rules appointed together to bind the members of Christ's Church upon earth, should be confirmed as such by Divine Authority, and christians should be held answerable for their obedience to such rules by God himself ; and also that in whatsoever things they should allow a liberty to the members of the church upon earth, the same liberty should be allowed in heaven. (See Vol. iii, page 187, and 285.) The former authority had reference to the general rules to be appointed by the Apostles in declaring the gospel ; and the present statement of the same authority is made with reference to the consequences resulting to individuals, from their acting according to those rules, or resisting and rejecting them.

It happened that one of the Apostles was not present with the other disciples, when Jesus thus appeared ; this was Thomas, otherwise called Didymus. And when he was told by the others (either that same evening, or perhaps the next day) that they had seen the Lord Jesus alive, he could not believe what he heard ; and declared that nothing should convince him that He really was come to life, but the testimony of his own eyes and his own feeling : unless he himself should see the marks made by the nails in the Lord's hands, nay, unless he should feel with his own finger that these marks were real, as well as that left by the

wound from the soldier's spear in his side, he would not give credit to their story.

Thomas was allowed to remain a whole week in this unbelieving state of mind ; but on the first day of the next week, the Lord was pleased to afford him the proof which he required. The disciples were assembled again in the same manner as they had on the day of the resurrection, and this time Thomas was with them. The same precautions had been taken against any interruption from their enemies, by fastening the doors. While they were thus together, Jesus appeared a second time amongst them, with the same blessing as before—"Peace be unto you." Then stretching out his hands, he desired Thomas to feel the wounds with his finger. Then he bid him place his hand into the larger wound in his side. Thus gently reproaching him for his unbelief, and want of feeling in refusing to give credit to his brethren, when they reported how they had seen their Master alive from the dead.

Thomas was overcome ; and at once expressed his faith by exclaiming, "My Lord and my God : " upon which Jesus bid him consider, that he had believed only because he had been convinced by sight ; adding that those should be happy and blessed who believed without having such proof as this. (Heb. xi. 1.)

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. Our Lord was pleased, on the occasions related in this portion, to manifest the nature and powers of his risen body in a more particular manner than upon any other. We may well

feel astonished at the way in which that body appeared and disappeared in a room, the door of which was fastened; although it was evidently of "flesh and bones," and as such was handled by those who were present; but while we confess our incapacity to comprehend the nature of what St. Paul calls "a spiritual body" (1 Cor. xv. 44), we should remember that we are expressly told, that the bodies of the risen saints will be of the same nature, and like this body of the risen Jesus (Phil. iii. 21. 1 Cor. xv. 47—53. 1 John iii. 2): and therefore it should be with a personal interest that we read these details. But this interest will be but idle curiosity, if it does not stir us up to walk so as to make "sure our calling and election" to so glorious an "inheritance of the saints in light." A constant recollection of the wonderful blessedness kept in store for the true people of God, ought to be a prevailing motive to a watchful continuance in holiness, such as becomes those who are looking forward to this state of glory.

#### QUESTIONS.

Do I often reflect on the glorious body into which my vile body will be changed, if I be indeed one of those who are spiritual christians in this present state?

How do these reflections influence me, with reference to the manifestations of the risen body of Christ, to whom we are to be like?

2. With reference to our Lord's language to his apostles concerning the remission, or retaining, of sins, it would be proper to read the 3rd application of portion 98 (see Vol. iii. page 189); and also the 3rd application of portion 108. (See Vol. iii., page 290.)

3. There is in this portion a very powerful and pointed lesson of general application. Our Lord

upbraided Thomas (and probably some others also) for the "unbelief and hardness of heart" they shewed; not, in this case, for resisting the truth of the doctrines of the gospel generally, but for refusing to believe the testimony of those who had seen him alive after he had been dead and buried: nothing but the experience of his own senses would convince him. Our Lord did indeed give him the testimony he asked for; but in doing so, he at the same time reproved him; moreover he gave a blessing to those, in every generation of the church, who, without the testimony of their own senses, give full credit to the fact of Christ's resurrection, as related in the Scriptures. Now while there is a general consent that the Scriptures 'are true, and an acknowledgment in the Creed (too often without due consideration) that Jesus "rose again from the dead;" there may still be much of that "unbelief and hardness of heart" which drew forth our Lord's reproof, and little claim to that blessing which he gave to those "that have not seen, and yet have believed." And it is of the utmost importance, that we should examine the real state of our own belief in the facts of the resurrection, by endeavouring to realize the circumstances which then took place, and by often thinking on their certainty, and on their connection with our personal hopes and expectations.

## QUESTIONS.

Do I fully believe the fact of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus?

Am I doubtful as to the particular circumstances?

Do I feel for Thomas's difficulties with any thing like a fellow-feeling? or am I rather shocked at his unbelief and hardness of heart?

Am I comforted by the hope of receiving the blessing promised by our Lord to those that believe without sight ?

#### VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for grace to look forward with joy to possessing a body like the body of Christ in glory; and ask especially that this anticipation may make you more anxious in striving after holiness.

2. Pray for a hearty and willing belief in all the wonders of the resurrection; plead the promise made by Christ to those that believe without seeing, and ask for its fulfilment to yourself.

#### VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Almighty God, whose power is able to subdue all things to thy self, give me grace I beseech thee, to look forward with heartfelt rejoicing to the time when the vile bodies of thy faithful people shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of thy dear Son Jesus Christ: and grant me such a comforting assurance that, through thy mercy and for Christ's sake, I myself shall be of that number, as may lead me to live more like Christ now in this present time, in expectation of his perfect likeness in the time of glory. (2) Give me, blessed Saviour, a spirit of simple faith, to receive all the truths of thy wonderful resurrection. Remember, thine own gracious word, which I humbly spread before thee,—“blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” Give me the blessedness thou didst thus promise: Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief; and comfort me with that happy prospect of eternal glory, to the honour of thine own great name. Amen.

Our Father, &c.



## TWO HUNDRED &amp; TWELFTH PORTION.

Jesus appears to the women ; and then to 500 disciples.—His sixth and seventh appearances.

PLACE.—*Near Jerusalem ; and then in Galilee, probably on Mount Tabor.*

TIME.—*Some time after the 14th of April.—Year 30.*

## I. BEGINNING PRAYER

MAY God, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

## II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read St. Matthew's Gospel, c. xxviii. ver. 9, 10, and 16 to 20 ; also 1 Cor. xv. 6.

## III. THE MEANINGS ;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

Matthew xxviii. verse

19. teach *means here* make disciples of

1 Cor. xv. verse

6. fallen asleep . . . . dead

## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

After the circumstances recorded in the last portion, Jesus appeared to several women, amongst whom it can only be gathered that Mary the mother of James was one, and Salome another (Matt. xxviii. 1. Mark xvi. 1) ; while most probably Mary Magdalene was also with them. Jesus accosted them with a usual salutation, saying, " All hail." The women (being now accustomed to the thought that the Lord was alive again, which had caused them so great wonder and doubt when they had first heard it) reverently approached the Saviour in the attitude of worship ; and casting themselves on the ground, embraced his

feet. This Jesus permitted, though he had not allowed Mary Magdalene to do so, when he had first appeared to her on the morning of his resurrection. He now encouraged these women, bidding them not to be afraid ; and he sent them with a message to his disciples, whom he called brethren, desiring them to proceed to Galilee, where they should see him.

Accordingly the Apostles (who by the desertion and death of Judas were now only eleven in number) immediately set off on their journey, and arrived in Galilee. They had been informed by our Lord of the place where he would meet them ; and to this they went. It was a mountain : and it has been supposed by some to have been Mount Tabor, where he had been transfigured just a year before (portion 100. Matt. xvii. 1, &c. Vol. iii., page 207) ; and by others, to have been the mountain near Capernaum, from which he had delivered that discourse usually called the Sermon on the Mount. (Portion 29. Matt. v. 1, &c. Vol. i., page 228.) This appointed appearance of Jesus must have been the occasion mentioned by St. Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, when more than five hundred of Christ's disciples met together to see him after his resurrection. When the Lord manifested himself to this assembly of his disciples, they at once fell down to worship him. There were some however of those present who could not believe that the person they saw was really Jesus risen from the grave ; but these could not have been any of the eleven apostles, whose doubts, great as they had been, had been already removed :—the manner in which St. Matthew states the fact, shews that the “some” he speaks

of were some of the people who had come together in obedience to the message of Jesus : and this confirms the supposition that the manifestation mentioned by St. Matthew was the same with that mentioned by St. Paul.

In spite of their unbelief however, Jesus came to them and addressed them. He told them that all authority, whether to be exercised in heaven or on the earth, was now committed to Him ; having therefore accomplished the work he came about, and received as man the power of which he spoke, he now commissioned them to go forth, not only to the Jews, but to all the Gentiles, and to make them disciples of Christ. He commanded them to baptize the persons converted ; and this baptism was to be in the one name of the Trinity, including the persons of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He bid them instruct their converts to obey all that he had commanded ; and added a gracious promise that he would bless them with His presence by the Spirit at all times and seasons ("all the days," as it is in the Greek) ; and that this blessing should be unceasing, until the age (or dispensation of the Gospel) shall come to an end.

The resurrection of our Lord had taken place in the morning of Sunday the seventh of April, on which day he appeared four times—first, to Mary Magdalene alone—to Cleopas and his companion on the way to Emmaus—to Simon Peter privately—and in the evening to the apostles, except Thomas. On that day week (Sunday, the 14th of April) he had appeared again to the apostles, including Thomas, as we have seen in the last portion. It must have been after all these occasions

that he appeared to the women, as above stated ; but from the manner in which the fact is mentioned (Matt. xxviii. 9, 10), it may be necessary to explain at length some of the reasons for supposing Christ's appearance to the women to have happened at this time.

Now it is expressly stated, that after the resurrection Jesus appeared *first* to Mary Magdalene (Mark xvi. 9) ; and St. John (xx. 11—18) gives us the particulars of that appearance : for from what he tells us, it must be plain that Mary Magdalene could not have seen the risen Saviour before the occasion which he records. This appearance of our Lord to Mary took place at the sepulchre, after Peter and John had left it (see page 271) ; and the Lord gave her a message to his brethren concerning his ascension. This appearance could not have been the same with the appearance to the women spoken of above, as it differs in almost every particular ; while that to Mary Magdalene, having been certainly the *first*, must have been *before* this to the whole party of women. As St. Matthew's account taken alone might seem to imply, that the appearance which we are at present considering was the first which had occurred, it is important for us distinctly to observe the reasons why such could not have been the case. The apostles had been told of our Lord's resurrection, and of the angel's message, and two of them had gone to ascertain the truth, and had left the sepulchre, and all this before Jesus appeared *in the first place* to Mary Magdalene : it is evident therefore, that this statement in St. Matthew could not refer to the time when the women were in the way from the tomb to tell the disciples

what they had then seen. And that it cannot refer to what took place on the morning of the resurrection, is further confirmed by the fact that "Mary the mother of James" (who was certainly one of the women now met by our Lord) was the wife of Cleopas (John xix. 25), one of those to whom our Lord appeared on the way to Emmaus. Cleopas then knew that his wife had been to the sepulchre that morning, and that she had seen a vision of angels; but distinctly states that she had not seen the Lord. (Luke xxiv. 22-24.)

It, however, the statement in St. Matthew does not refer to the time when the women were going upon the first occasion to tell the disciples what they had seen at the tomb, it may refer to *any* subsequent period: and there are many reasons for supposing that the Lord did not meet this party of women until some time after the day-week of the resurrection, when he had shewn himself a second time to the assembled apostles, and satisfied the doubts of Thomas.

It appears that the minds of the disciples were very gradually prepared for receiving the knowledge of the Resurrection of our Lord as a fact. Before his death Jesus had foretold that he would rise again, and repeated this prophecy three times with great distinctness. (Portion 99. Matt. xvi. 21, &c. Portion 103, Matt. xvii. 23, &c. Portion 153, Matt. xx. 19, &c.) These repetitions had however, produced no effect in making the disciples expect so incredible an occurrence. When he had actually returned alive from the grave, he did not suddenly present himself before the apostles in their unbelieving state of mind; but some women were permitted to see the empty tomb—

angels were commissioned to point out the place to them, and to send them with a message of information to the disciples. The reports of different women concurred in their separate testimony on these particulars, which were further ascertained to be true by the personal examination of two of the apostles Peter and John : all this was to prepare the disciples for the sight of the risen Saviour, which at first was granted to a single witness only, Mary Magdalene—then to two men—then to Peter privately. Thus the doubts which clung to the minds of the apostles, were carefully and gradually overcome : then Jesus shewed himself to the whole company of the apostles, with the exception of one who was not present ; and the unbelief of that one he condescended to subdue by a second manifestation like the first.

It was however only to the apostles and disciples who were at Jerusalem, that this evidence of their Master's resurrection had been given ; and it was His purpose, to make a public manifestation of himself alive to the great body of his followers in Galilee, the country which had been the principal scene of his preaching and miracles. Hitherto he had appeared upon each occasion privately and unexpectedly, but this one great display of his resurrection was to be made by appointment. St. Paul states that Jesus "was seen of above five hundred brethren at once," of whom the greater part were living twenty-five years after, when he was writing his first letter to the churches at Corinth. There can be little or no doubt, that the manifestation spoken of by St. Paul is the same as that related in this portion by St. Matthew, as taking place in Galilee : for it is scarcely pos-

sible that so many as five hundred believers in Jesus could have been found together, under all the circumstances of the times immediately after his crucifixion, unless they had been assembled by appointment ; and our Lord's appearance in Galilee after his resurrection, was the only occasion on which we are told that he appointed his disciples to meet him.

Now it so happens that St. Matthew's Gospel is the only one which relates this great meeting of the disciples in Galilee for the purpose of seeing their risen Lord ; and that this is the only manifestation, which the account seems intended specially to refer to. His gospel was published in the very country where the event happened, only fifteen years afterwards, so that almost all the witnesses must have been living ; and as this was the great public testimony of the resurrection, given by appointment, one for which all the more private manifestations were but preparatory, St. Matthew confined his account to this. But to render this statement complete, it was necessary to mention the appointment made by our Lord himself, in a message sent through the women ; therefore he relates what took place when he shewed himself to them ; and the reason why this at first appears told out of its right place, is because none of the occurrences which did not relate to this appointed meeting in Galilee are noticed at all ; while all that had any reference to that meeting are noticed. St. Matthew tells us of our Lord's previous appointment before his death to meet his disciples in Galilee (Matt xxvi. 32)—then after the resurrection, he tells of the message

by the angel to the disciples, that Jesus would go before them into Galilee (xxviii. 7)—then he tells of our Lord's own appearance to the women, in order himself to fix the appointment at the time it was about to be kept (xxviii. 9, 10)—and then he relates the meeting in Galilee, and the solemn charge and commission there given by Jesus (xxviii. 16—20.)

But if, in spite of all this, it should be said that the words at the beginning of the ninth verse (“as they went to tell his disciples”) seem plainly to imply, that the Lord appeared to these women on the morning of the resurrection; it must be stated that there is good reason to doubt, whether those words were not inserted by some person who made copies of St. Matthew's Gospel many years after it was written. It is only between three and four hundred years since printing was invented; before that time all books were in writing only, copies being written out as they were wanted. There are a great many different copies of the Scriptures, thus written out many hundreds of years ago, which are now kept in various libraries and public institutions; and learned men have compared every word of these different writings together, and have found them all to agree, except occasionally in some trifling matters of no great importance. With respect to this verse however, some of the oldest written copies of the Gospel which now exist, do not contain the words “as they went to tell his disciples;” but the verse stands, “And behold Jesus met them, saying, All hail,” &c. On the whole then it seems clear that this appearance to the women took place more



than a week after the day of the resurrection, and not long before the time when the meeting in Galilee took place.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. Comparatively few persons take pains enough to become thoroughly acquainted with the merciful way in which our Lord arranged the testimony, necessary to convince our earthly and unbelieving minds of the reality of His resurrection. He shewed himself once for all to the whole body of those persons who had been his regular followers during the course of his ministry on earth ; and he gave an opportunity for every person who desired to be present on the occasion, by making an appointment for the purpose, and sending them a previous invitation to meet him in Galilee. Besides all this, he had taken the tenderest method of preparing the minds of the disciples, by the way in which he had gradually removed the doubts and difficulties of those who had more intimately known him, and who would therefore convey their own impressions to the rest : the steps taken for this purpose are pointed out in the explanation. Still we find after all that some, even of those five hundred people who met him in Galilee, doubted the truth of what they saw with their eyes : it must be very evident therefore, that those who refused to believe him while alive would have remained unconvinced, and the wickedness of their unbelief would only have been aggravated. This is not only a complete answer to those who ask, why the resurrection did not take place in the presence of the multitude of the

Jews ; but it has a direct application to ourselves, who profess to believe the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ, to which he set the seal of certainty by his resurrection from the dead. The pains which he took to give every reasonable proof of the truth of his resurrection, is a great mercy to us, if we heartily believe it to be true, and shew the reality of our belief by our conduct : whilst on the other hand it will increase the condemnation of those, who practically refuse their assent to what has been so carefully shewn to be true.

QUESTIONS.

Do I perfectly and without doubt believe in the certainty of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus ?

How is my heart affected by the thought of the great care that was taken to afford all needful proof on this great point ?

2. It was upon the occasion of our Lord's publicly shewing himself to his disciples after his resurrection, that he delivered to them that blessed commission, which has been the authority to his servants for gathering in of his Church ever since. It extended the privileges of covenant with God from the Jews to persons of all nations. It put aside circumcision, as the outward seal of God's people, and established baptism in its place. And while it required that Christ's disciples should be taught to observe all his commandments, it conveyed the solemn promise and pledge that He himself would be daily present with his people in spirit, until he shall come again in person, and take them to be ever with himself. To us Gentiles, this commission and this promise are of unspeakable value ; and an increased solemnity is given them, by the fact that they were pronounced in the name of the eternal Trinity, so as to afford

the strongest testimony to the truth of that important doctrine of three persons in One God. The baptism commanded by Jesus Christ, is to be performed in the One name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost : and we cannot suppose him to have united any one less than God in the statement of that great name, while confirming the charter of man's salvation. Hence arise feelings of highest awe and worship in the heart, at the time all the affections are excited by the blessed covenant of the Gospel.

## QUESTIONS.

Do I value the privileges of the baptismal covenant ? have I availed myself of them to the blessed effect intended by Christ ?

How far am I striving to observe all things commanded by Christ ?

Am I sensible of His spiritual presence with his Church now ? and how far do I value it ?

Do I partake of the blessing of His presence by his Spirit dwelling in me ?

How am I influenced by the remembrance that I have been baptized in the name of the ever blessed Trinity ?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for a deep sense of the tender mercy of Christ shewn in the manner of giving the proof of his resurrection ; and for grace to be duly influenced by it.

2. Pray to be brought into the full blessing of the baptismal covenant ; and to live worthy of so great mercy, and proving the presence of Christ with you.

3. Pray for continued steadfastness in the faith of the doctrine of the Trinity.

## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O Almighty God, who through thine only begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death,

and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life, I thank Thee for the tender mercy which thou hast manifested, in adapting the evidence of thy power rather to our weakness than to thy majesty. Affect my heart with a deeper sense of the power of the resurrection; and enable me to shew its power in me, by myself rising from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness. (2) Bestow upon me the fulness of that blessing which thou, Lord Jesus, didst purpose for man in the covenant of baptism. Make me to be indeed thy disciple; teach me to observe all that thou hast commanded. Dwell with me by thy Spirit, and comfort me by thy presence day by day, under every circumstance of my life. (3) And as thou has given me grace by the confession of a true faith to acknowledge the glory of the Eternal Trinity, and in the power of the divine Majesty to worship the Unity; keep me I beseech thee stedfast in this faith, that I may live unto Thee, my Creator, Redeemer and sanctifier, one God blessed for evermore. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

## TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH PORTION.

The seven disciples fishing.—The eighth appearance of Jesus.—

*Conversation, No. 75. Miracle, No. 46.*

PLACE.—*By the Lake of Gennesaret.* TIME.—*Sometime between the 14th April, and the 16th May.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURE.

Read St. John's Gospel, chap. xxi. ver. 1 to 24.

### III. THE MEANINGS;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

John xxi. verse

|             |                   |                       |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 7. girt     | <i>means here</i> | tied                  |
| naked ..... |                   | stripped to the waist |
|             |                   | for work              |

|                 |  |                                  |
|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 8. cubits ..... |  | measures of nearly two feet each |
|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|

|                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| 12. dine ..... | eat a meal |
|----------------|------------|

|                   |         |
|-------------------|---------|
| 18. girdest ..... | dressed |
|-------------------|---------|

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 22. tarry ..... | remain alive |
|-----------------|--------------|

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

We are not informed what was the course taken by the apostles, after the appointed public manifestation of our Lord upon the mountain in Galilee. We learn however from St. John, that five of them remained for a season in Galilee; namely—Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, John and James the two sons of Zebedee, and Nathanael, who belonged to the town of Cana. To these five, together with two other disciples who are not

named, Jesus appeared on the shores of the Lake of Gennesaret (otherwise called the Sea of Tiberias)—the place where he had so often taught the people before his crucifixion.

The manner in which this manifestation took place was as follows. The seven disciples being in company together, Peter proposed that they should occupy themselves in their old business of fishing ; probably because they would have otherwise been without means of support : to this the others agreed. They lost no time in acting upon this arrangement ; but went on board a fishing vessel at once, and worked all the night with their nets. They however caught nothing. In the morning they saw a man standing on the sea-shore :—this man was Jesus, but the disciples did not recognize him. Jesus called to them in a kind and familiar manner, asking them if they had any fish on board, as if he wanted to buy some. They told him they had none. He told them to throw their net into the sea on the right hand side of the vessel, and then they would catch some. Although they did not know who it was that spoke to them, yet they did as he said, probably taking it as a matter of advice. When they began to draw in the net, they found that it contained such a large number of fishes, that it was too heavy for them. Upon this, John (who, writing the account, calls himself “ that disciple whom Jesus loved ”) felt convinced, that it was the Lord who bid them cast the net ; and he told Peter who it was.

As soon as Peter heard that it was Jesus, he hastened to put on his upper garment, which he had taken off while at work in casting the net. Then his earnestness (probably increased by a

secret sense of shame at the remembrance of his denial of Jesus) made him unable to wait till the boat could get to land ; but buckling tight about him the loose outer garment he had just put on, he jumped into the sea, and swam ashore. The fishing vessel was only about a hundred yards from the shore ; and the other six disciples (having cast out their anchor to secure it) got into the little row-boat, and came to the land, dragging after them the net, with its full draught of fishes.

When they were all landed, they found that a charcoal fire had been kindled, and that some fish and bread were laid upon it to be dressed. How this took place is not stated ; and some have supposed, that the fire with the food was miraculously produced there by Jesus. The Lord then desired them to bring some of the fish that had been just caught ; and Peter immediately went up to the others who, having landed, were holding the ends of the net, and he helped them to draw in the whole draught ; when they found that there were no less than a hundred and fifty-three of the large sized fish. Such a weight would naturally have been enough to break the meshes of the net ; but still it had not broken.

Jesus then desired them to come and break their fast (for the word that is translated “dine,” does not mean to take the meal which *we* call dinner.) The disciples did not venture to make any inquiries of him, being well aware in whose presence they were. He joined them at the meal to which he had invited them, giving to eat the several portions both of the bread and of the fish which had been dressed. St. John tells us, that this was the third occasion upon which Jesus, since

his resurrection, had appeared to any number of his apostles collected together. That this is what St. John means, is plain from the fact that, besides having himself related the particulars of two previous appearances to the assembled apostles (John xx. 19-29. See portion 211), he had also recorded in detail the circumstances of our Lord's first appearance to Mary Magdalene alone : so that in saying "the third time," he could not have intended to include every occasion on which Jesus had appeared to any persons since his resurrection. Calculating every manifestation already recorded, this was the eighth time Jesus had appeared ; although it was only the third time on which he had shewn himself to any of his apostles assembled together.

When the meal was over, our Lord spoke to Peter : addressing him by the name he had borne before he was called to be a disciple of Jesus. He called him Simon son of Jonas, and asked him whether he loved Him with a greater affection than that of his fellow disciples, to whom he then pointed. Peter in reply professed his own love, but made no such bold statements with regard to others, as he had done repeatedly on the night before the Lord's crucifixion. (John xiii. 37. Luke xxii. 33. Matt. xxvi. 33. see pages 30, 37, and 115.) In saying this, the word that is used to express the love that Peter felt, is not the same as that employed by Jesus in asking him whether he loved him. The word in the answer may be applied to a more fervent kind of love than that in the question. Our Lord said to him, "feed my lambs : " that is, Peter must give a proof of his love, by being diligent in supplying the means



of spiritual life and support to those who might be as it were but young in the knowledge and experience of the truth ; the recollection of his own foolish self-confidence, and painful fall in consequence, would peculiarly fit him to discharge such an office as this. (Matt. xxvi. 69 &c. portion 189. see page 143.)

Jesus again put the question to Peter, whether he loved him. To this Peter replied in the same words as before ; upon which the Lord gave him a charge similar to the former one, bidding him shew his love by carefully attending to the spiritual wants of the more advanced amongst his people ; “ feed (or shepherd) my sheep.”

Not content with Peter's repetition of his reply, Jesus asked him the same question a third time. This time his question is expressed by the same word as Peter had used both times in his reply. Peter's heart was distressed at this repeated enquiry ; and doubtless conscience would remind him of the three times repeated denial of his Lord, which had so speedily followed his three times repeated profession of more love than others for his master. Conscious of the sincerity of his love, conscious at the same time how great reason he had given for his professions to be distrusted, he replied by an appeal to the Lord Jesus as the discerners of hearts ; “ thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.” Jesus then again bid him feed his sheep. Most likely this took place at the moment that they were all rising from the meal they had now finished, and when Peter was buckling the loose outer garment more tightly round his body, as was the custom when about to do anything after lying down at a meal : for Jesus,

continuing to speak to Peter, told him that in his youth he had girded himself, or fastened his own clothes, and went whichever way he liked ; but in his age he should stretch out his hands, while others should fasten his garments, and take him by force where he would not like to go. By these words our Lord shewed beforehand the manner in which Peter was to be killed as a martyr for the glory of God. (2 Pet. i. 14.)

Upon saying this, our Lord walked forward, and bid Peter follow him. Peter obeyed ; and looking round as he proceeded, saw that John was immediately behind them. (John here describes himself, not only as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," but also as he who, lying on the same couch with him at the last supper, with his head on the Lord's breast, had asked which of the apostles He meant, by saying that one of them should betray him. (John xiv. 23-25.) The sight of John led Peter to ask Jesus, what was to be the end of *his* course. The Lord did not see fit to satisfy the curiosity of Peter, but gently reproved him for the enquiry. Suppose Jesus chose that John should continue his course on earth, until the day of His own return in glory, what was that to Peter ? His concern was to obey what had been commanded him, and himself to follow Jesus.

The other five disciples who were walking in company with Jesus, heard this remark ; and it afterwards became a current report amongst christians, that John was to live till Christ's second coming in glory. (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. 1 Thess. iv. 13-18.) This however was a mistake of our Lord's words. He had not said that John should never die ; but had only reproved Peter for making

the enquiry concerning his end, by saying, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" John himself gives testimony to the words which Jesus spoke upon this occasion, as well as to the other statements contained in his Gospel; and there can be no doubt of the correctness of such a witness.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures: see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. Although it may be difficult to decide upon the nature of the motives which led these disciples to return to their occupation of fishing, we may gather from it that, as they had not received the sealing of the Holy Spirit to guide them with power into all the truth they were appointed to preach, they were well employed in gaining their subsistence by the exercise of their ordinary calling. And the Lord manifested himself to them while they were thus in the path of duty.

The nature of the miracle by which he made them know that he was present especially calls for our attention. At the opening of his ministry, when he first called his disciples from their ordinary business to follow him that they might become qualified to be witnesses for him in all the world, he performed a similar miracle; and told them plainly, that he meant thereby to shew that they should become "fishers of men." (Luke v. 4-11. Portion 43. Vol. ii., page 1.) And now having prepared them to be witnesses for him, and being about to qualify them by the gift of the Holy Ghost to be the instruments for gathering his people by the effectual preaching of the Gospel, he renewed the instruction to them by repeating

the miracle, Multitudes of converted souls have been since spiritually gathered, in the way this miracle represented. The apostles, and subsequent preachers of the gospel appointed by Christ, have gone forth preaching the Word. Many have toiled during a long night, without being the means (as it appeared) of gathering a single soul by true conversion to Christ; but when the Saviour himself pleases to be present with them by His Spirit, and gives the word, though his ministers may not be aware of his working, numbers of sinners are brought to serious consideration of their condition and danger. (Matt. xiii. 47—50. Portion 73. Vol. ii., page 253.) It should be a matter of earnest enquiry with every one, whether he be really drawn into the gospel net at the word of Jesus; and whether, if he be a professing christian, he is one who in the great dividing referred to in the parable, will be cast away as bad, or gathered up as good.

#### QUESTIONS.

Have I been drawn into the church by the true Gospel which is according to the word of Jesus?

Do I examine myself to ascertain this? and do I compare the ministry I attend with the Scriptures?

What will be the result to myself on the great day of dividing the professing church? What course do I pursue to establish a good hope that I may be gathered amongst the good?

The third application of the fifty-third portion may be read here with advantage. See vol. ii. page 6.

Also the first application of the seventy-third portion. See Vol. ii. page 256.

2. What must have been the feelings of Peter under the powerful, yet affecting and tender rebuke of our Lord. He says nothing of the weakness

and wickedness shewn by Peter's repeated denial of him. At the time when the sin was committed, he had only looked at Peter (Luke xxii. 56—62. Portion 189); and now he only touched his conscience, so as to make him recal that look; how important is it for us to keep our conscience lively and wakeful. A sense of sin, constantly producing its humbling effect upon the heart, will make us ready to feel the Lord's rebuke for our sins at the first call on the conscience, whether he pleases to do it by His providence, or by His word. If we were watchful, as well as humbly convinced of sin, we should discover Christ's purpose to put us on our guard against our besetting sins shewn in many things, by which he may be said to repeat to us his question to Peter, "Lovest thou me more than these?"

## QUESTIONS.

Am I sensible of the many ways in which my course of conduct may be said to deny Christ? am I humbled for this?

Do I readily receive the application of the word of God or the circumstances of his providence to call me to watchfulness against sin?

Is my conscience drowsy and forgetful? or is it awake and lively in its exercise to humble me and bring me to Christ?

3. Our Lord's repeated answers to the declarations of Peter's affection for him, shew us the way in which he desires that his people should manifest their love to him. "Feed my lambs"—"feed my sheep"—these are the testimonies of love which Jesus requires; and hence it is that we may "know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (1 John iii. 14. John xiii. 35.) The earnest desire and delight to assist christians, becomes a testimony that we love Christ, and the love of Christ stirs us up to do what we

can in their behalf: especially we rejoice to forward their spiritual interests, tending the religious education of the young and weak, and strengthening the more advanced christians in their progress. It is of the greatest importance to our own spiritual advancement, that we should diligently ascertain whether we are giving this evidence of our love of Christ, so far as our own power may extend; or whether our thoughts and feelings are so selfishly occupied, that we find little or no time for obeying this injunction of Jesus to those who profess to love him.

## QUESTIONS.

What are my feelings towards christians, as such, without taking into account any other point in their personal character, which may be likely either to draw my natural affections, or my natural dislike?

What am I in the habit of doing on behalf of christians, as such, either generally for the whole body of christians around me, or particularly for special objects?

How do I assist the means of religious education, and so fulfil the law of the Lord, to tend his lambs?

What means do I take for advancing the spiritual welfare of the Lord's people?

Do I think little about affording such spiritual help to any body? If so, why? and what state of mind towards Christ must it be a sign of?

4. Peter's attempt to discover the future circumstances of St. John, instead of searching into the meaning of our Lord's address to himself, was an instance of the manner in which we are all apt to throw away the benefit of personal warnings, by wasting the impression at first made by them in idle curiosity, as to their application to others. Whether it be the appeal of some awakening sermon, full of warning, or the more powerful warning of some providential preservation, it is too common for the thoughts to be drawn off from our-

selves, by a secret enquiry about the effect on some one else like Peter's "What shall this man do?" And our Lord's rebuke applies equally to every such case. "What is that to thee? follow *thou* me" may be said to the heart of the enquirer. If there be a hearty desire to profit by every message of the Lord, so as to follow him ourselves, then our minds will be less inclined to busy themselves about the application of such warning to others.

## QUESTIONS.

Is my attention commonly engaged about the measure in which other people are proceeding on their christian course? or do I rather habitually take heed to my own progress?

Do I more readily think how a sermon applies to others, than dwell upon its application to myself?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray that you may be effectually gathered into the church, and kept in grace until the day of the Lord.

2. Pray for such liveliness of conscience as may keep you always able to apply the Lord's rebukes to your besetting sin.

3. Pray for grace to find real enjoyment in assisting the spiritual progress of all the Lord's people; and ask for more love to Christ in order to be able to do so.

4. Pray to be kept in humble attention to your own walk and from the indulgence of idle curiosity concerning the cases of others.

## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O merciful God, who hast sent thy messengers to call such as shall hereafter inherit thy kingdom of glory, make me I beseech thee, one of thy true people who, being born from above, shall be kept by thy power, unto everlasting salvation.

(2) Quicken me to a lively sense of the holiness which thou lovest, and of the sin which thou hatest; that so I may at all times keep in remembrance my infirmity and frequent offences, and that the least rebuke through thy word, or thy providence, may lead me to repentance, and rouse me to watchfulness against sin. (3) Thou knowest,

Lord, that I love thee, yet how weak and faint are my spiritual affections—Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief; make me to abound in love to thee, that I may more diligently tend thy lambs, and feed thy sheep. (4) And enable me so to feel the short-comings of my own life, which need thy reproof, that being humbled and watchful of my own walk, I may be kept from giving way to idle surmises and curiosity concerning any other; taking heed to prepare in my own soul for the end thou hast appointed for me, wherein to glorify thee. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

## TWO HUNDRED AND FOURTEENTH PORTION.

The Ascension.—The ninth and tenth appearances of Jesus.—  
*Conversation, No. 76. Miracle, No. 47.*  
 PLACE.—*Jerusalem and Bethany.* TIME.—*Thursday the 16th May.—Year 30.*

### I. BEGINNING PRAYER.

MAY GOD, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, give me the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. AMEN.

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read 1 Cor. xv. 7. Luke xxiv. 44—49. Acts i. 4—8. Mark xvi. 15—19. Luke xxiv. 50—53. Acts i. 9—12.

### III. THE MEANINGS;

or sense of some words as used in this portion.

LUKE xxiv. verse

46. to suffer *means here* to be executed  
 49. endued..... supplied inwardly

MARK xvi. verse

17. signs ..... miracles



## IV. THE EXPLANATION.

We find from the passage in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians already referred to, that after the general meeting of the brethren to see the risen Lord by his appointment in Galilee, he shewed himself to James alone. James, the son of Cleopas, is generally supposed to be the person spoken of, rather than the son of Zebedee and brother of John. This was the ninth manifestation of Jesus after his resurrection.

Upon the next occasion of such an appearance (which was the tenth and last), we find the Apostles again assembled together, on the fortieth day after the resurrection at Jerusalem. Jesus joined himself to them then ; and directed them to remain in Jerusalem, until the promise which he had conveyed to them from the Father should be fulfilled (John xiv. 16—18, 26 ; xv. 26 ; xvi. 7, 13, 14.) He put them in mind how before his death, while he was yet living amongst them, he had told them of all that was then taking place, and had forewarned them that everything about himself which had been prophesied in the Old Testament, should certainly come to pass, whether it was to be found in the writings of Moses, or in those of the Prophets, or in the Psalms. In saying this, Jesus bestowed upon the Apostles so much of the power of His Holy Spirit, as enabled them to understand the true meaning of the Scriptures : and mentioning such points to them as he judged right, he said that as such and such things were written in the Old Testament, it became necessary for the Messiah to be executed, and afterwards on the third day to come again from the dead ; and that the Gospel, requiring a true turning of heart to

God, and proclaiming the remission or forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus, was to be preached amongst all the different nations of the world ; taking care that, in the first instance, these blessed tidings should be placed before the people of Jerusalem—the ancient people of God—the Jews. The Apostles were to bear testimony of the things which they had seen and heard ; and to enable them to do this more effectually, Jesus told them that he would send the Holy Spirit upon them, as God the Father had promised : in order that they might be enabled by that Spirit to preach the Gospel with the power given to them from heaven. Our Lord drew the distinction between the preparatory ministry of John the Baptist, who had baptized with the outward sign of water, and the ministry which they were to exercise after they had received the true inward baptism of the Holy Ghost, with which they should be baptized within a few days of the time he was speaking to them.

While Jesus was thus with them, the disciples took the opportunity to enquire of him, whether he intended at that time to raise the Jews from their state of subjection to the Romans, and make them the great kingdom they had once been, as in the time of Solomon. This was the view they took of those prophecies of the Old Testament which speak of the kingdom of Israel and of David, in its future glory. (Gen. xlix. 10. Isa. i. 26 ; ix. 6, 7. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6 ; xxxiii. 15-17. Ezek. xxxviii. 24—28 ; &c., &c.) The Lord did not lead them to suppose, that they were wrong in expecting the restoration of the kingdom of Israel ; but he told them, that it was not their part to know the particular times and seasons for the fulfilment of those

prophecies which spoke of such an event. God the Father had made no revelation of his will in this respect, but had reserved those periods for completion according to His own power. (Mark xiii. 32.) Calling however their attention to the duties assigned to them in the work of hastening the great end they desired, he told them that when the promised gift of the Holy Ghost was come upon them, they should be possessed of such powers as would make them witnesses for Christ, not only in Jerusalem and all the country of the Jews, but also in the country of the Samaritans, and in every country all over the globe.

Jesus walked with his Apostles from Jerusalem as far as Bethany ; and it is not impossible that this conversation took place whilst they were on their way. When they arrived at that part of the Mount of Olives where the village was situated, the Lord delivered to them his solemn commission, bidding them go forth into all the world, and proclaim to every human being the glad tidings of salvation through Christ. He declared, that whosoever believes that gospel, and in consequence professes his faith by baptism, "shall be saved ;" but on the other hand whosoever does not believe that gospel "shall be damned." He told them, that to believers in general should be vouchsafed certain miraculous proofs of divine power ;—some should be enabled to cast devils out of possessed persons in the name of Jesus ;—some should be enabled to speak in languages which they had not known before, and that without learning them ;—some should be able to take up poisonous reptiles without being harmed ;—some to escape the natural consequences of any poisonous drink they

might have accidentally swallowed ;—some should have the power of healing sick people by laying their hands upon them.

When Jesus had delivered this commission, he raised his hands and gave his apostles his parting blessing ; while he was in the act and attitude of blessing, his body was lifted up gradually from the earth, and went up into heaven ; not as he had disappeared upon some other occasions, but carried up openly before their eyes. At some distance from the earth, a cloud came round him, altogether covering him, and thus they lost sight of him ; “ he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”

The eleven Apostles continued on the mountain, earnestly looking after the cloud in which he had been hid from their eyes ; but their attention was at length called, by the appearance of two persons amongst them who were clothed in white, and were evidently angels. The angels asked them, why they continued gazing upward into the heavens ? They need not expect to see him descend again at that time ; but the day would certainly come, when the very same Jesus now taken up in the sight of his disciples into heaven, shall come back again to the earth, in precisely the same manner as he was seen to go from the earth.

After this, the apostles first performed an act of worship to their ascended Saviour, and then went back to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives ; which was only the short distance called by the Jews “ a sabbath day’s journey ;” supposed to be about a mile. Their hearts were full of joy at what they had heard and seen, and they expressed this joy by continually going into the Temple, praising and blessing God.

## VI. THE APPLICATION.

1. The Lord Jesus was pleased to open the understanding of his disciples, in order to make them know the Scriptures, which he had then fulfilled. He had done the same before to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus; and in every generation, none can understand and rightly apply the Scriptures, unless the Spirit of Christ open the understanding to perceive the truth. But Jesus, while in his conversation he was opening the minds of his disciples, promised to send the gift of the Holy Ghost to them. He has fulfilled that promise; and if we ask for the light of that Holy Spirit to shine upon the Scriptures, we have the Lord's promise that it shall be given, and shall guide us into all truth. (Luke xi. 13. John xiv. 26, 27.)

## QUESTIONS.

Do I seek the gift of the Holy Spirit to open my understanding, whenever I read the word of God?

Do I feel that only the Spirit of Christ can make me heartily acknowledge the doctrine of Christ's atonement—suffering—death—resurrection and ascension?

2. There is nothing in our Lord's answer to the Apostles' question about the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, to discourage the expectation of that glorious period, to which so many parts of the old prophecies clearly point: we should therefore be careful how we pass over such prophecies, without remembering the certain fulfilment which they will one day have. The figurative explanations which used to be given of such prophecies no longer appear satisfactory to many of Christ's ministers: the subject has been studied more carefully, and more light from above seems to have been vouchsafed for understanding the Jewish

prospects, just at the same time that a very remarkable stir is made amongst the Jews themselves. From these happening together, we might almost be led to hope, that the time for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, was likely to fall in our generation. But whilst we humbly search the Scriptures, to inform ourselves more fully on this interesting point ; we must never forget what our Lord said respecting the times and the seasons being reserved by the Almighty for his own knowledge alone, having kept to himself the power to shorten or lengthen the time before predicted events happen. This statement of Jesus should have the effect of making us watch anxiously for the signs of that great event, with which the happiness of the spiritual Church of Christ is so much connected ; and yet without depending too confidently upon calculations of dates, to which our examination of any particular portions of Scripture may lead us. (Mark xiii. 28—33.)

#### QUESTIONS.

Am I interested in the fulfilment of God's promises to the Jews ? Do I expect their restoration to Jerusalem ?

Does this expectation lead me to search the Scriptures, to ascertain what God has revealed on the point ?

3. This portion contains the solemn final commission which our Lord gave, to preach the Gospel, and gather the Church. It contains an awful alternative : the Gospel is sent into all the world—a true faith in it leading to an open profession of that faith—this is declared to be absolutely necessary to salvation ; on the contrary, a resistance and rejection of that gospel seals the condemnation of the unhappy soul who “believeth not :” “he

that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." It seems hardly possible to read these words, proceeding from the mouth of Him to whom all judgment and power is committed in heaven and earth, without thinking how much we are answerable for in hearing the gospel; and this thought should quicken our prayers to obtain the Spirit of faith, by which we may believe to the saving of our souls.

## QUESTIONS.

How have I received the gospel, which has been sent by Christ to be preached in all the world, and has reached as far as me?

Am I satisfied with having been born in a christian land, and admitted to its profession by baptism?

Or do I believe to the saving of my soul?

4. We read in this portion the great final act of the Lord's ministry upon earth—his public ascent into heaven, there to remain as man in the highest place of honour, far above all angels or other created beings, and therefore said to be at the right hand of God. Here the Gospel history leaves him; and the teaching of the apostles afterwards instructs us that he there "ever liveth to make intercession for us," being while there "touched with a feeling of our infirmities." (Heb. iv. 14, 15; vii. 25.) There is great mercy in the manner of the departure of Jesus from the earth: that he went up gradually, evident to the eyes of the disciples not changed into any other form, but rising with the selfsame body, in which he had so long been seen by them. This too enables us to follow him with our hearts and minds; and to feed upon the comforting thought that he feels for us as Man, at the same time that we adore him as the Son of God, equal with the Father. This mercy was confirmed by the assurance of the angels that

the very same Jesus, who had just been taken up into heaven, should return to the earth in the manner in which he had just left it. The return of the Saviour in clouds is promised in many parts of Scripture ; and the repetition of this promise at the moment of his departure has established the expectation of his reappearing, as the hope of his Church ever since. To believe the gospel without expecting this, is to enter upon a course, without looking to any end. Many who are mere professors of christianity, without feeling its power, have no thought of such an event as the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth again : but it becomes those who truly believe the Gospel, to keep continually in remembrance the immense advantage of having such a friend in heaven now ; and to look forward with earnest hope to be called into the joy of their Lord, when he "shall so come in like manner as he was seen to go into heaven."

## QUESTIONS.

What comfort do I derive from the thought that the Lord Jesus is ascended into heaven, and there remains at the right hand of God ?

Do I consider his mediation and intercession, and the influence they produce upon my spiritual and temporal condition ?

Am I looking forward to his return to the earth ? If so, with what expectations ?—with what confidence ?—with what practical effect in preparing for him ?

## VII. HEADS FOR PRAYER.

1. Pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit to open your understanding, and to shew you the things of Christ in the Scriptures.

2. Pray for the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem, and the fulfilment of God's promises to the Jews in his own good time.

3. Pray to be blessed with the spirit of faith to receive the gospel fully and effectually to the saving of your soul.

4. Pray for the full benefit of the intercession and mediation of the Lord Jesus, while he sits at the right hand of God ; and pray for a faithful and scriptural expectation of his return in glory.



## VIII. THE PRAYER.

(1) O God, who art the giver of every good gift, mercifully bestow upon me the gift of the Holy Spirit ; that my understanding may be enlightened to perceive the things of Christ in the Scriptures, and that my heart may be open to attend to them. (3) Give me a Spirit of faith, that I may receive the Gospel in all the fulness of its power to the saving of my soul, so that it may never prove my condemnation. (2) Look down, I beseech thee, with compassion upon thine ancient people Israel, to whom thou hast been pleased to give such great and precious promises ; and mercifully hasten the time, when they shall receive their fulfilment. (5) O thou Son of David, Saviour of the world, who art ascended up on high and sittest on the right hand of the Father in heaven, ever living to make intercession for thy people ; mercifully grant that I may receive the full benefit of thy blessed mediation. Fill me with the hope of thy glorious return to the earth. Teach me to understand whatever thou hast been pleased to reveal concerning it. Quicken me to a holy preparation for thy coming in glory ; so that having a good hope that thou wilt receive me in thy mercy, I may by thy grace purify myself even as thou art pure. AMEN.

Our Father, &c.

## TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTEENTH PORTION.

The Conclusion.

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### I. BEGINNING PRAYER

**MAY** God, for the sake of **JESUS CHRIST**, give me the **HOLY SPIRIT**, that I may understand this portion of his Holy Word, and profit by it. **AMEN.**

### II. THE SCRIPTURES.

Read **St. John's Gospel**, chap. **xx.** ver. **30, 31** ;  
**xxi. 25.** **St. Mark's Gospel**, chap. **xvi.** ver. **20.**

### III. THE MEANINGS ;

[There is no word used in this portion the meaning of which seems difficult to understand.]

### IV. THE EXPLANATION.

**St. John** tells us at the close of his gospel that there were many more miracles done by **Jēsus** in the presence of his disciples, than those of which he has given an account. Those however which he had selected to relate were written, in order that those who read them might believe on **Jesus** as the **Messiah**, the eternal Son of God ; and that their faith might be indeed that spiritual faith, which gives life to the soul through the name of that same Saviour. (1 John v. 10-12.) But if all the things done by **Jesus** were to have been related, **St. John** says he supposes that the world would not have been large enough to contain the accounts.

**St. Mark** closes his gospel by stating that the apostles went forth, in obedience to the last great commission of the Lord **Jesus**, preaching the gospel wherever they went : they found that the

ascended Saviour fulfilled his promise. He evidently worked with them, and confirmed the truth of their words by the miracles which, in his name, they were able to perform. The events thus shortly summed up by St. Mark, are related at length by St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles.

#### V. THE REPETITION.

Now read again the Scriptures : see No. II.

#### VI. THE APPLICATION.

Thus is closed the inspired history of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ upon earth ; and the last words of it are marked with one important application. The Gospels were written to present before us Jesus, as the object of our faith, in all the power of his divinity, as well as in the mercy of his manhood ; and the effect of this faith is life—spiritual life now through the name of Jesus, growing up into eternal life hereafter in the glory of Jesus. The main thought to be applied to our hearts in connection with this close, is the REALITY of the things which are therein told us concerning Jesus, and their *real influence* upon ourselves, either for condemnation or for salvation. The great difficulty lies in realizing their truth in a practical manner ; so that, though they relate to present things which are now hid from our eyes. and future things which we only expect, we may lay hold of them with that faith which “ is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.” This alone can make us in earnest about life, so as to use the things of time with reference to their sure connection with the things of eternity. Those who read the gospels without this effect, read them in vain ; for they were written in order that we might believe that

**Jesus is the Christ the Son of God ; and that believing, we might have life through his name.**

**QUESTIONS.**

Do I realize the certainty of the things which are written in the Gospels ?

Have they the effect upon me which should be produced by sure facts ?

Do I realize the power of the doctrines they set forth ?

Do they produce in me the effect of spiritual life, through the name of Jesus ?

**VII. HEAD FOR PRAYER.**

Pray that the Spirit of God may enable you constantly to realize the truth of the things which are written in the Gospels concerning Jesus Christ ; and that you may grow in spiritual life thereby.

**VIII. THE PRAYER.**

Merciful God, be pleased to give me the Holy Spirit, that he, dwelling in me, may enable me to live as in thy sight, and as seeing the invisible things belonging to my eternal salvation. May the things which are written in thy Gospels concerning thy beloved Son, Christ Jesus our Saviour, lead me to that faith in Him, by which I may receive life through His name, to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. **AMEN.**

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; But deliver us from evil : For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

A list of the different Texts which are referred to in the course of this Volume, put down in the order in which they come in the Bible ; so that the reader may turn to the page put opposite to each text in this list, and he will find out something which will help to explain that part of Scripture. By the use of this list much may be learnt concerning many other parts of the Bible, besides those which are the principal subjects of the explanation.

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[The letter (a) at the end of the line shews that the subject is to be found in the Application. Where this is not put, the subject is to be found in the Explanation.]

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